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ia 126 April/
May 2019

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international artist

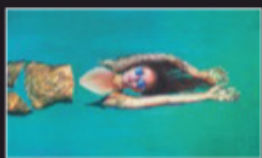
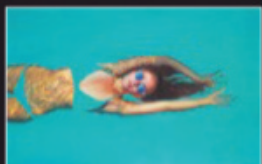
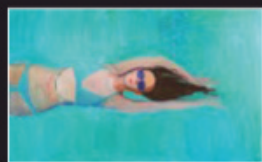
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Deborah
Friedman
STUDYING THE COLOR FIELD

THE DISCOVERY OF AN IMPORTANT NEW COLOR TOOL

As an artist, you've seen everything. At every turn there is the new thing that is going to change your life. Right? Sadly, most of those things are a disappointment. After all, there is rarely anything new under the sun.

Accidental Magic

Sometimes things happen by accident. Such was the case when I was sitting at the lunch table at the Liliedahl studios when John Pototschnik was there to shoot his first video, a little over a year ago. John said, "Want to see what I'm working on? It's my life's work." Then he pulled out a stack of about 60 small paintings of a house. Each painting was the same scene, yet every scene looked completely different.

Artists Struggle with Color Unnecessarily

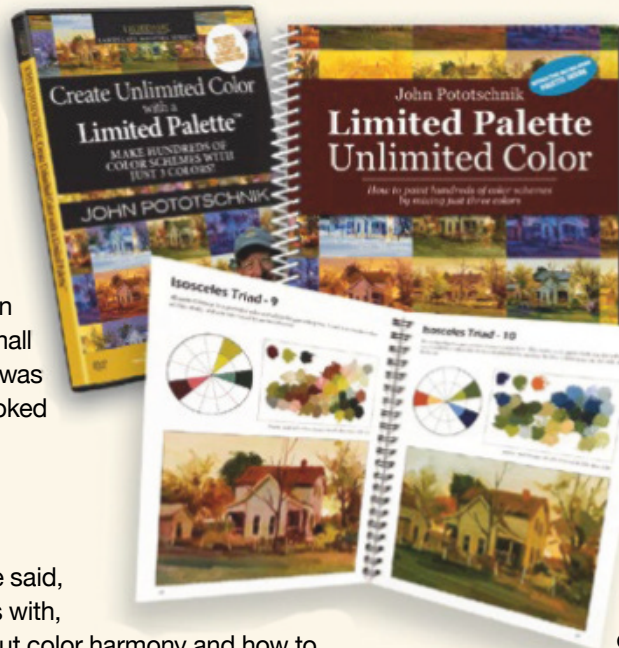
When I asked what I was seeing, he said, "Color is what every artist struggles with, and there are all these theories about color harmony and how to use color to make your painting better. But it tends to confuse most artists, and there are lots of different theories. So I started working on a system that makes it easy to understand, and a way you can just pick the mood and feel you're looking for and see how to mix it."

Hundreds of Color Moods

He went on to tell me that everything I was seeing was done with the same three colors and white, and yet, by putting the emphasis on certain combinations, he had created all these variations. John went on to say, "It's been a monumental tool for all the artists I teach, and they all want copies of all these paintings and the formulas — but that, frankly, isn't practical."

A Eureka Moment

Then I had an "aha" moment. What if we were to put all the mixing formulas in a book so artists could turn to the mood they want,



and then mix to get the exact feeling they desire? John loved the idea, and even suggested we make a companion video to teach them how to do it.

A New Kind of Book

As we brainstormed, we decided there should be a transparent palette included, and to make the book sturdy and spiral-bound so it will lie flat. Artists can mix the colors on the palette directly over the page they want to copy. I don't think that has ever been done.

Our First Video/Book Combo

In our 30-plus years, this is the first time we have made a video with a companion book. Watch the video, with over 11 hours of training on how to make these formulas, and then flip through the book, which shows examples of different color moods and how to create them. This will become a companion in your studio to guide you for years to come.

Kevin Macpherson and James Gurney

Each has written a foreword to the book and made it clear that understanding this method will make your paintings better.

Of course, we offer a money-back guarantee if you don't fall in love with the product. It's not in retail stores and only available at our website, at www.lilipubs.info/pototschnik-unlimited-color.

Ralph Liliedahl, Co-Founder

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John Pototschnik





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Vincent Miller Publisher/Editor-in-Chief

EDITORIAL

Joshua Rose Editor
editor@internationalartist.com

Rochelle Belsito Managing Editor
assistanteditor@internationalartist.com

Taylor Transtrum Associate Editor

Michael Clawson, Alyssa M. Tidwell
Contributing Editors

ADVERTISING

Heather K. Raskin Senior Account Executive
hraskin@internationalartist.com

PRODUCTION

Adolfo Castillo Multi Media Manager

Tony Nolan Art Director

Audrey Welch Graphic Designer

Dana Long Production Artist

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Emily Yee Subscription Manager
service@internationalartist.com

Robyn Carson Accounts

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INTERNATIONAL ARTIST (ISSN 1440-1320)

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RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO
EXPRESS MESSENGER INTERNATIONAL
PO BOX 25058 LONDON BRC, ONTARIO, CANADA N6C 6A8

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

International Artist (ISSN 1440-1320)
7530 E Main Street, Suite 105, Scottsdale AZ 85251.
Single copies in USA \$8.95. Online subscription rate for one year in USA \$38.

To place an order, change of address or a customer service question, please send to PO Box 2320, Scottsdale AZ 85252 Periodicals Postage rates paid at Scottsdale, AZ and at additional mailing offices.

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Now is the time

As I'm sure you know, *International Artist* magazine also publishes four other art titles: *American Art Collector*, *Western Art Collector*, *American Fine Art Magazine* and *Native American Art*. Through working on these magazines every month we get to know collectors, art dealers, auction professionals and museum curators across the country.

What we are hearing is that now is the time to buy and invest in art. We are in the midst of the strongest art market in the last six years. So what does that mean for all of you budding artists out there? It means now is the time. Now is the time to work on your skills, to find the time and direction you need to take the next step and become a professional painter. And, remember, you don't have to go at this alone. Every story we print in this magazine is geared to helping you better your craft, to become the painter you've always wanted to be.

And it's not just the stories. Look at our workshop guide and find the relevant classes being offered around you. Look at our advertisers and see the wonderful products, classes and events they are offering right now as well. It's all right there to be used in an easy and accessible format. So jump right in, get started and become the artist you've always dreamed about becoming.

Then, let us know about your process! We are always eager to hear from the tens of thousands of readers we have across the world. Just email me at editor@internationalartist.com

Sincerely,

Joshua Rose
Editor



Access the complete magazine from anywhere in the world with a Digital Subscription.

**TURN TO PAGE 129
TO SUBSCRIBE NOW!**

P.S. We are about to finalize something that will make all of this even easier and better! Stay tuned to the pages of this magazine for some important announcements!



MAIN COVER ARTIST

DEBORAH FRIEDMAN

Counterpoint in Green, colored pencil on
Strathmore Bristol Board, 21 x 15" (53 x 38 cm)



International Artist Magazine



@internationalartistmagazine



Page 66 Ginny Page, *All We want is Love* (detail), oil on Belgian linen, 96 x 134 cm (38 x 52")

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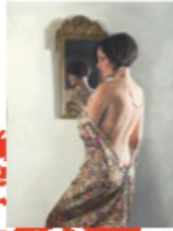
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INTERNATIONAL ARTIST
PO Box 2320, Scottsdale, AZ 85252, USA
Tel 1 (877) 947-0792
Email: Service@InternationalArtist.com
www.InternationalArtist.com

EDITORIAL INQUIRIES

JOSHUA ROSE, EDITOR
Editor@InternationalArtist.com
ROCHELLE BELSITO, MANAGING EDITOR
AssistantEditor@InternationalArtist.com
Tel (480) 425-0841 Fax (480) 425-0724
INTERNATIONAL ARTIST
PO Box 2320, Scottsdale, AZ, 85252, USA



Demonstrations, Workshops & Master Painters of the World

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All the Prize Winners in our *International Artist Magazine Challenge No. 110*

ABSTRACT/ EXPERIMENTAL ART



Vince Natale New York, USA, *Dreamer*, oil, 10 x 8" (25 x 20 cm)

Grand Prize is a four-page editorial feature in *American Art Collector* magazine

Pulling from Emotions

Historically, Vince Natale has painted contemporary representational works with narrative or allegorical imagery that also has an emotional charge or mystery. Natale previously worked as an illustrator where the messaging had to be very clear in this work he created. Over time, in his personal artwork, those messages have become more subtle as he experiments with techniques and style.

Natale elaborates, "I'm not constrained by that requirement and I can be as obvious or as obscure as I like. But I don't want to be so cryptic as to be dismissed as nonsense. I also paint a lot of landscapes now which I never really got to do outside of little background vignettes in my illustrations. Painting landscapes has allowed me to experiment with subtle changes in my technique and helped me to loosen up in a big way, for me."

Inspiration can strike around any corner for Natale, with aspects of the natural world being among the most influential. He is also drawn to "the seemingly fathomless convolutions of human emotions and psychology." Natale explains, "These all dictate, individually or in combination, the type and look of a painting I'm working on. I suppose the one overarching motivation/inspiration is to create a mood/atmosphere. I think those are the things that initially draw a viewer in and strikes a chord. This would come through the use of color, lighting and value control/manipulation."

Natale's abstract paintings are much more personal, being expressions of his personal

feelings regarding events in his life—many of which are interpersonal struggles, grief and loss. He works intuitively when creating this series, allowing the vague shape or design that comes into his mind to develop freely on the canvas.

"I start to look for form, movement, texture, space and begin to embellish or downplay certain aspects of what's come out of my painting tool based on composition and how different elements interact with each other," he says. "All the while [I am] trying to develop or maintain the initial feeling I'm wanting to express. When I start to develop forms within the composition I ask myself what certain shapes remind me of, what could I turn them into? Does this help to convey my state of mind?"

My Inspiration

In general, my inspiration was feeling a desire to return to an idea I had many years ago, which I began to experiment with, that I'd then abandoned due to the demands of my career as an illustrator, and in combination with some life changes that were going on at the time. Specifically, my inspiration for this particular piece was, again, life changes; somewhat uncomfortable ones. I wanted to express/purge some the feelings I was having, which couldn't be done properly (in my opinion) via my usual means of traditional representational imagery.

My Design Strategy

In wanting to express an abstract idea or sensation, an abstract design seemed

appropriate. I still wanted to exercise representational style without really showing anything readily identifiable, but still displaying form and substance, allowing the viewer to make their own associations, regardless of what my own intentions might be. For this piece, I needed to show chaos and isolation, as well as fractured or questionable identity.

My Working Process

My process here was mostly intuitive, based on how I was feeling at the time. I started with a canvas, one color of paint and several non-typical materials to move the paint around with, but I also incorporated a bristle brush. I laid down a semitransparent layer of dark pigment over the canvas in a random fashion—thicker, thinner, more pressure, less pressure. After establishing a foundation, I went back in with a variety of materials to scrape away or add pigment, which helped me build structure and texture. When that underpainting dried, I went back in with color using sable brushes and "rendered" the final piece—adding to or subtracting from what was already there in the underpainting and making a kind of tornado of disjointed, semi-identifiable forms hinting at biological and/or organic origin, as well as a little bit of distant, outer space connotations.

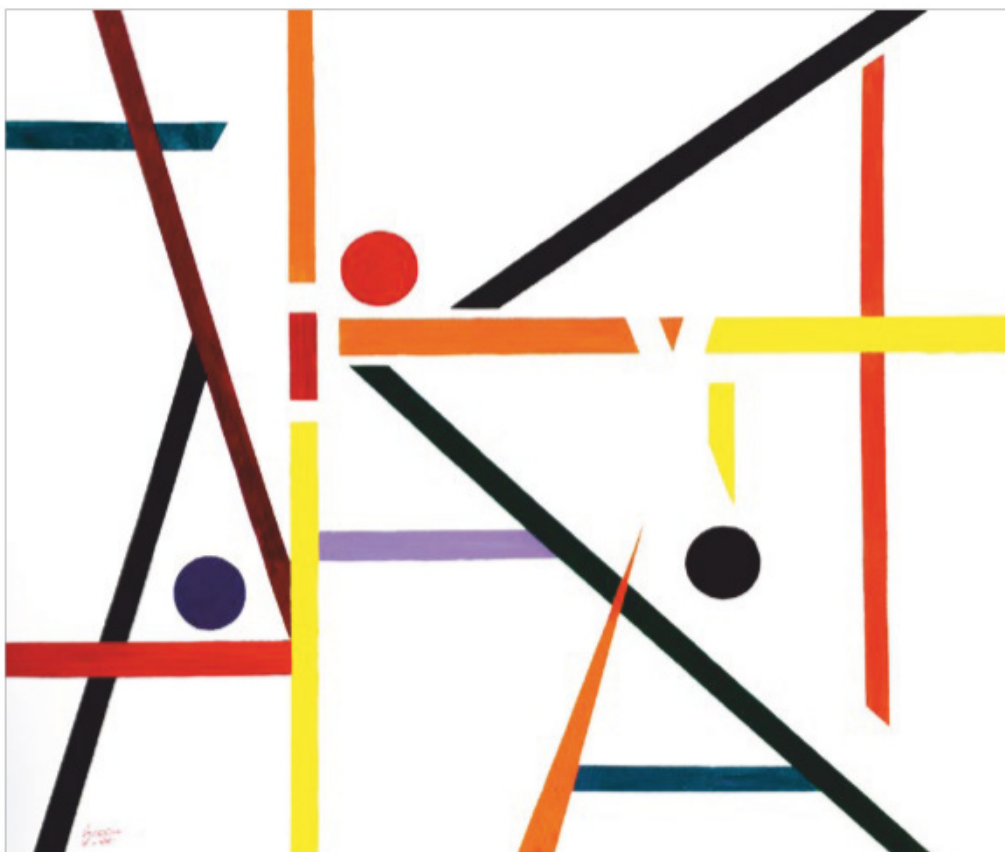
Contact Details

» Email: vnatale@hvc.rr.com,
vince@vincenatale.com

» Website: www.vincenatale.com



Force



Second
Prize

Sukhvinder Saggu

Australian Capital Territory, Australia, *Push and Pull*, acrylic, 20 x 24" (51 x 61 cm)

Second Prize is a two-page editorial feature in *American Art Collector* magazine

My Inspiration

I started drawing in my primary school days. In 1977, during my first year at university, I painted my first commissioned portrait. Since then, art has been a part of my life, though I painted as a "Sunday painter" after finishing my post-graduate degree in engineering.

For the last 41 years, I have remained in push and pull mode, between being a full-time technocrat and an artist, like most artists who are mostly amateurs. Three years ago, I decided I would have to choose between my job and my passion. In September 2018, I quit my job to pursue my passion. I thank my wife for her support and for the fact that she made me stick to my decision.

I painted this piece in early 2018 as a small study on paper when my brain was in a confused emotional state, wandering between positivity and negativity about the future.

My Design Strategy

Though I mainly paint in a traditional

realistic style, occasionally I paint abstract expressions to free myself from a precise process using splashing colours or abstract shapes with bold brushstrokes or palette knife. When transforming your emotional tension to a visual language on to a two-dimensional surface, one needs forms, shapes, colours, textures and some methodology.

Abstract and experimental artworks are very fascinating for me as I don't have any preconceived visual forms or props to work with. As a trained engineer, I love geometric forms and express my ideas of tensions of the mind with lines, angles and spherical shapes. My aim was to paint a minimalist piece that would be very precise, clean, vibrant, pure and full of energy, with the largest part being an open space depicting clarity, abundance and a bright future.

My Working Process

Being a Sunday painter, initially I painted very small studies when executing a

large canvas due to lack of time. I am quite miserly when it comes to painting materials, especially oil paints. This artwork was initially done with leftover paints on a palette on A3 paper as I never waste any paint or let it dry. The final piece was painted on a stretched canvas on which I painted an additional couple of coats of gesso. I use acrylic paints as they are very vibrant when used in pure form. I used masking tape extensively for sharp, straight lines and applied two to three coats of individual colours with flat nylon brushes without any dilution to keep the glow intact. I hope the viewer will feel the tension and energy that I experienced while painting this piece.

Contact Details

» Email: sagguartist@gmail.com

» Website: www.sagguartist.com



Evie Zimmer Ohio, USA, *Live Wire*, oil, 36 x 72" (91 x 183 cm)

Third Prize is a one-page editorial feature in *American Art Collector* magazine

My Inspiration

I have always been influenced by color and design. Ever since I was a child I have loved optical art and the hippy-dippy flower-power art of the 1960s. As I grew older I learned about fractals and mathematical designs, which had a major impact on the type of art I was creating. I stepped out into a different world of self-expression.

My inspiration for *Live Wire* came from a number of things, the main one being neon signs. I wanted to express the luminous color, the excitement and feel of the city lights, and the "electricity" without using any text or representational imagery.

My Design Strategy

The design pattern for this work is based on concentric circles. I place the focal point

away from the center of the canvas to add to the feeling of movement. I then add a variety of "swirly" lines, weaving them back and forth between the circles and gradually increasing their amplitude as I work toward the outside edges. I continue to add lines in a loose pattern until I feel comfortable with the composition. Once I begin to paint, the details get worked into the design. In some of my pieces I am very precise about the design and measure everything. But in this piece I went for a more organic feel and worked freehand.

My Working Process

I begin my paintings with a simple sketch to lay out my design. Then I select the colors I plan to use; in this painting I believe I chose all of them! Well, maybe not all,

but enough to confuse myself at times. Once I start painting, the process becomes meditative. I work with small brushes, blending and adding details. My friends jokingly tell me I'd get much more work done if I'd use bigger brushes. But I know I wouldn't get the results I want. Once the canvas is completely covered with paint, I go back into it tweaking things a bit and adding more shadows and highlights.

Contact Details

- » Email: eviezzz@sbcglobal.net
- » Website: www.eviezzz.wixsite.com/eviezimmer

Too much fussing and the artist disappears. — Harley Brown

FINALISTS

Each receives an Award Certificate and a one-year subscription to *International Artist magazine* PLUS having their work seen worldwide by international galleries looking for new talent.



Denise Alexander California, USA, *Gilded Water*, acrylic, 14 x 11" (36 x 28 cm)

Finalist

My Inspiration

My foundation for artistic inspiration comes from my family. I developed a strong appreciation for art at a young age, as both of my grandmothers were extremely talented artists across several mediums. My work is mostly inspired by my affinity for rich, bold colors found in nature.

My Design Strategy

The vision in my mind begins with a premeditated color palette. I also strategize a layering technique that will bring about elements of contrast once the paint is poured on the canvas. In terms of execution, a large part of the process is embracing unpredictability.

My Working Process

When mixing acrylics with pouring medium, I like to experiment with the paint density. Using various densities for each color gives me more control in how the colors blend and interact with each other.

Contact Details

» Email: deniselalexander@gmail.com

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Chantal De-Carufel-Leduc Ontario, Canada, *Oppression*, acrylic, 59 x 96" (150 x 244 cm)

Finalist

My Inspiration

I was searching for my people when I first started this piece. I am of Algonquin decent and was raised in unceded Algonquin territory in Northern Ontario. Simultaneously, I was also studying anti-oppressive social work practices to better understand intergenerational trauma. The oppression and resiliency of Indigenous people is what became the theme of this piece as I put paint to canvas. I observed, whether from brutal or subtle acts, oppression had become normalized for generations and this can fuse with prevailing attitudes about who Indigenous people are today. Oppression of a people can cause massive distractions, massive destruction and carnage from the outside and from within. But there is hope, resiliency and opportunities for reconciliation if we embrace courage to go there. Miigwetch.

My Design Strategy

The approach to the design was mostly through dialogue. It was a visceral, cerebral process; I didn't sketch a thing. I interviewed several Indigenous people including paraprofessionals, elders and people close to me to gain a better understanding of how oppression occurs and impacts. At first the piece looked very hierarchical with many straight lines but then it was dismantled showing the chaos that ensued as described by the stories that were shared with me including my own. I did not journal these stories as the oral exchange of stories is how we can honor and keep stories like this alive. I honor these stories by leaving a story of my own. The color is an interpretation of emotional journeys, systemic disenfranchisement and hope.

My Working Process

I worked directly on the floor and layered

my understanding of what oppression is and how resilience can permeate through that. There was intentional placement of color and change in design as I gained deeper understandings. The color hues used describe a moment in time, events that took place and gains/losses made from those acts, i.e., I used various shades of blue to make resilience permeate through, gold was used to earmark capital gains; black for carnage.

The piece took several months and more changes were embedded throughout a few years after as my learning continued. The materials used were acrylic paints with palette and splatter work. The canvas size was specific so that the story had a large stage from which to tell itself.

Contact Details

» Email: chantal.sdcledu@gmail.com

» Website: www.artthreadevolution.com

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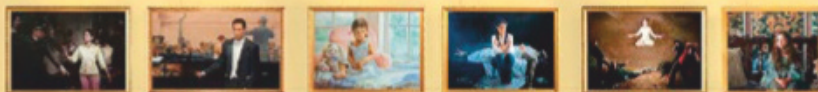


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It's believed that traditional realistic techniques are fundamental to fine art, which is one of the most important cultural expressions of our civilization. However, techniques themselves are not all of the art. An artist differs from an artisan in that an artist can give his work valuable spirit that mirrors his personal characteristics to nourish the audience positively.

It's also believed that an artist is a guide for the audience, therefore being responsible to society. His work belongs not only to himself, but also to society as it influences society in many ways. Therefore, a leading artist must be aware of his mission in reviving traditional fine art nowadays.

DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION: JULY 15, 2019

Finalist Display: November 24-30, 2019, Salmagundi Art Club (47 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10003)

Gold Medal Prize: \$10,000

Details: OilPainting.NTDTV.com



Aparajita Sen New Jersey, USA, *Ridges 1*, acrylic, 24 x 24" (61 x 61 cm)

Finalist

My Inspiration

Over the last couple of months I have been very intrigued by our earth and how beautiful it looks from the sky, something I keenly observed during my many travels around the world over the past few years. The vivid colors that are visible are so unique and vibrant that I immediately desired to capture those colors on my canvas. Additionally, climate change is a phenomenon that has often concerned me so I started painting a new series called *Our Earth*. As I work mostly from imagination, the only thing I knew about this painting when I started working on it was my color palette. As I began laying the colors it all came to together naturally on the canvas.

My Design Strategy

As I stared at the blank canvas, the design that came to my mind was hues of pale blues and some darker shades of blue merged with white. I worked with the soft blues of the cerulean blue, the serene white, the dark phthalos blue and some bright oranges to add energy. I wanted to draw the viewer's attention to the movement of color by creating few areas of interest. I used darker shades to create the depth in the painting. I also added some texture and some warm colors to ignite the canvas with some vibrant color.

My Working Process

This painting is prepared with acrylic paint

using the layering and pouring technique.

I lay the first layer of paint that is thinned with some water then I wait a few hours and return to add another layer of paint. Some manipulation with the brush creates the desired movement I want to capture. I added some more paint lightly mixed with water to create the texture. Then I came back to add the last layer of the bright colored orange to draw the eyes to the focal point. Finally, I use a small brush to add the final details.

Contact Details

» Email: aparajitasen2@yahoo.com

» Website: www.senjita.com

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Harold Barnard Maine, USA, *Rock Show*, watercolor, 32 x 42" (81 x 107 cm)

Finalist

My Inspiration

This painting is about equality, fairness, respect and coming together, treating all with peace and love. With so much divisiveness in the world, some may find comfort within the embrace of nature, art and music. Much of my work tries to bring attention to our natural world and environmental needs. Within this painting are representations of nature: birds, fish, dolphins, jellyfish, whales, bears and wolves. All are welcome and equal at this rock show. At the *Rock Show* there is an exchange of living currency, which is of spirit and energy of life, with each other, wrapped together in music, art and nature.

My Design Strategy

I find it interesting when something from a

distance looks like one thing, but upon closer inspection, find that it looks like something else completely. I would like the painting to remain interesting, so one may look at it and see different things as time passes. I enjoy nonfigurative painting in that it leaves room for interpretation by the viewer.

Sometimes someone shows me something about my painting that I hadn't seen myself. I like to create a painting that may be looked at and interpreted in different ways, but simultaneously allow the viewer to see and feel the underlying message.

My Working Process

I try creating a lot of movement within the painting, blending organic elements into it.

I represent the show participants coming from

all corners. I select my colors. I like to use a lot of water and paint both dry and wet on wet. I like to get large portions of the color filled in first. I take pictures of the painting as I go along and look later at how it was constructed. I usually have a couple of paintings going at once, using 4-by-6-inch postcards as test paper and occasionally come up with some decent little paintings in the end. When I'm painting, in a place where time seems to evaporate, and the painting grows itself under your brush, this is a wonderful thing, for both painter and viewer. Peace and love.

Contact Details

» Email: harold@oneseestudio.com

» Website: www.oneeseestudio.com



Lana Costanzo Missouri, USA, *The Kiss*, acrylic, 24 x 24" (61 x 61 cm)

Finalist

My Inspiration

My inspiration is fueled by passion: passionate people, passionate colors and passionate experiences. In *The Kiss*, my desire was to capture a moment in a couple's relationship when they felt alive and connected. It is designed as a reference image to look at even when your relationship gets difficult—a positive reminder! Yes!

David Hockney has inspired me tremendously. I get a strong feeling that I can do anything in my art career when I think of him. One of my lifetime goals is to meet him in person or talk on a video conference call. His swimming pool paintings are so magnificent!

I like to ignite a warm fire in your brain when you view my innovative art. Like chocolate, art makes our world a better place.

My Design Strategy

First, I figure out the conceptual underpinning for the result of my painting. Then it is time to identify where it is going to be displayed (gallery, museum, themed exhibition, home/office) and if they have certain requirements, goals or a specific corporate culture. The interplay between my design strategy and business strategy needs to be congruent. With *The Kiss*, it was important to me that my paintbrush seems to dance across the canvas, exploding in rich, vibrant color. I wanted to capture a passionate relationship that you can feel.

My Working Process

My preference is to work with a wraparound canvas. I like to paint all four wraparound sides—sometimes as a continuum of the

painting. Other times, it's completely different from the front-facing painting. For instance, *The Kiss* has a white circle painted on the 2-inch edge above their faces. It's a fun surprise (circle of love) that you don't see when you look directly at the painting.

My freezer is usually full of mixed paint. I bet you are thinking—are you kidding? I primarily work with acrylic paint. Trying to replicate a color after mixing a few colors together can be frustrating. So, I learned to freeze the paint. Just defrost and you have the exact color you used earlier. Voila! Happy Painting!

Contact Details

» Email: lane@lane-c.com

» Website: www.lane-c.com

No particular reason is still enough to make art. — Harley Brown



Louie Rochon Washington, USA, *Road Trip*, acrylic, 40 x 60" (102 x 152 cm)

Finalist

My Inspiration

Why do I paint? To survive, literally! Challenged with clinical depression and bipolar disorder most of my life, I've refused to allow it to take my life. It's come close, far too often, but art has saved me. For 20 years now, I've poured my honest feelings and emotions directly into my work, been an outspoken advocate for mental illness and stubbornly dragged myself into the studio daily, regardless of my state of mind. I "know," by faith, if I show up, park my butt in front of a canvas, inspiration will eventually replace my desperation. By far, the hardest part of art is getting in front of that canvas. The rest is pretty easy; it just flows out from inside me, through paint, onto canvas.

My Design Strategy

I have no design strategy, well, not really. Depends on my mood. Most paintings begin on the floor with pre-cut primed canvas from 84-inch rolls, anywhere from 8 feet to 12 feet. I have been able to work big, without any limitations or my OCD kicks in. With *Road Trip* I used Golden Fluid Acrylics, various acrylic, metallic inks and flow agents, using a large trowel in quick singular outward strokes. The next phase was five to six layers of acrylic flows, metallic drops, all wet on wet for two days, thick palette applications and hand bottle markings and detail work. I always take a photo of the work to crop, then have a custom stretcher frame made. I stretch and voila—a finished piece.

My Working Process

I paint on the floor, on vast sheets of white canvas, music blaring, on my hands and knees, wet, fast and furious, late into the night, often for days at a time. It's a deeply emotional "trance-dance" of sorts and when the music abruptly stops, it always startles me, the sudden, deafening silence void of the creativity; I sit there, utterly and completely spent. My painting is finished. To add just one more drop of paint would completely destroy it. Often I cry, not sure why? I've just poured all of my emotions, all of me onto and into that canvas. I "am" my paintings!

Contact Details

» Email: uswalker3@hotmail.com

» Website: www.rochonfineart.com



Marcia Wegman Iowa, USA, *Floral Dreams*, acrylic, 40 x 40" (102 x 102 cm)

Finalist

My Inspiration

My inspiration for this painting was a commission for five abstract acrylic paintings for two formal dining rooms at a new retirement community in my area. It was an opportunity to work in a larger format than I had previously attempted. For many years I have switched back and forth between realist pastel landscapes and abstract acrylic paintings. With the landscape painting I am working from my own photos concerned with the elements of a very particular place but with the abstracts I am tapping into an inner mystical place where I can be playful and experimental. The endless possibilities of color combinations keeps me passionately involved with abstract work.

My Design Strategy

I had been given the interior designer's "design board" for this project with samples of wall color, carpeting, wood and fabrics so I started out with some of these colors but

because of the rather neutral scheme I felt it was important to include some brighter colors as well. YUPO paper, a plastic paper from Japan, had long been my paper of choice for figure drawing. I was thrilled to find out more recently how well my abstract acrylic techniques work on it. I describe my painting process like the discovery of an enticing path disappearing into a beautiful wooded area (I love to hike). I am impelled to follow the trail having no idea where it will take me but thoroughly enjoying every step of a beautiful journey and being completely surprised and delighted at where the journey ends.

My Working Process

My painting process is to choose two or three colors and apply them randomly with a large flat brush to the paper taped to foam core. I work flat on my studio table. One layer suggests another. New colors are brought in; others all but covered. After a few layers using a variety of tools of which my favorites are

silicone color shapers, I begin to use Venetian plaster. I use it both in the white it comes in but also add color to suit the composition. I sand the dried Venetian plaster layer with three different grades of sandpaper. This always reveals interesting lines, textures and colors under the new layer. This process goes on for many layers, going back and forth with acrylic paint and Venetian plaster. As the painting begins to gel and come into view, my process slows and I work with much more deliberation. I brush on a coating of gloss medium between some of these layers. This deepens and enriches the color and separates the layers of paint. Once I feel there is nothing to add or subtract from the painting I apply the final coat of gloss medium and two coats of matte medium.

Contact Details

» Email: wegman6711@msn.com

» Website: www.marciawegman.com

I understand work, less so talent. — Harley Brown

Margaret Nachshen

Quebec, Canada, *Bulb and beetles*,
watercolor, 29 x 22" (74 x 56 cm)

Finalist

My Inspiration

I grew up in Cheshire, England, and as a child, often helped with the sorting and planting of bulbs, rhizomes and corms. Although I have often drawn and painted bulbs, they have been fairly representational with the subjects in different stages of development. I had no actual subject for this painting, just a memory of a bulb's heft, tactile sensation and the intricacies of its layers. I wanted the painting to convey all the promise of life contained within the bulb. I thought of the amaryllis and the way its dead and withered leaves transform themselves into long, delicate, faded ribbons. When handling earth, one often finds interesting insects among the roots, though not quite so colourful as these imaginary ones!

My Design Strategy

All I had was an intuitive idea that I wanted a globular form that would express the inherent natural magic of a bulb with its life cycle, growth, decay, beauty and colour, all hidden inside. I did not have a particular or formal design strategy when I began, but I was lucky to have some long undisturbed sessions in my studio. When this happens, the creative part



of the brain becomes unlocked, imagination soars and the ability to concentrate is enhanced. I drew upon all I remembered about bulbs, roots and soil. Imagination took over and I painted freely without guidelines or references, to impart the visual sensation of the energy of a plant living with its natural companions, the earth and insects.

My Working Process

I started by laying down the outline of the space the bulb would occupy, but as the painting progressed, the bulb grew bigger and the line was lost. The areas of texture, pattern, soil and leaves were painted directly with an ordinary pen nib and small or

medium brush. Each shape found itself and settled into a relationship with the shape adjacent to it, suggesting the natural contours characteristic to a rounded object, without being too representational. I used many layers of transparent paint and glazed most of it. Some opaques were used in the soil and the little beetles were dropped into the root structure to suggest the symbiosis that is always present but often hidden in the natural world.

Contact Details

- » Email: mnachshen@bell.net
- » Website: www.margaretellisnachshen.com



Martin Banks Hessia, Germany, *Eyes on You*, oil, 80 x 80 cm (31½ x 31½")

Finalist

My Inspiration

My work is inspired by the world around me, the everyday visual stimulus and also from the paintings of other artists whether they be abstract, realist or something in between. Structures, for example, are important in all aspects of life in the fabric of cloth, in architecture, in cells and other biological organisms. I like the idea of a living moving structure and I try to give that quality to my work. I was also inspired by bales of recycled paper I saw stacked at a recycling plant, the patterns of tartan and pictures of cities seen from above. I am constantly reminded of these ideas while painting.

My Design Strategy

I always work with square forms. The canvas is square shaped and onto this I create a

network of overlapping horizontal and vertical lines in a roughly square shape. These lines will be mostly, but not completely, lost in the final painting. I have to plan in advance the general colours and tones I want the finished work to have so that the network of lines will not blend in too much with the over-painting. The tone of each colour is critical to the success of the painting. I tend to work in a high key to give the work an overall lightness and freshness. The network of horizontal and vertical lines is surrounded by space, which draws attention to the outline of the painted area contrasting it with the hard edge of the canvas square.

My Working Processes

When I start working into the painting I am looking to create colour harmonies which resonate together. My goal is to

have the painting look as natural and complete as possible, as if it is organic. My method is to hold a dialogue with the work and I react and make changes to the painting throughout the painting process. I sometimes feel the painting is giving me hints and clues as to what I need to do next. I like the visceral quality of the paint itself and work and re-work the painted surface using brushes and palette knives until I achieve the right effect. This results in a thick, sticky built up surface with a strong three-dimensional effect.

Contact Details

- » Email: martinbanks@gmx.de
- » Website: www.martinbanksart.com

Bad days can finally bring wisdom. — Harley Brown



Wei Yan Ontario, Canada, *Nirvana of Phoenix*, acrylic, 61 x 91 cm (24 x 36")

Finalist

My Inspiration

As an artist with a Chinese background, I try to add in symbolism to my creations. One of my biggest inspirations is the phoenix. According to legends, the phoenix is the messenger of earthly happiness. Legends say that for 500 years she carries herself with accumulated bitterness and hatred. She then goes and sets herself on fire, trading life and beauty for earthly peace and happiness. In my opinion, the phoenix is something of great beauty as it implies the meaning of how there is no turning back, but also could represent a mental breakthrough.

My Design Strategy

I have been thinking about creating more free styles lately. I believe that imagination and creativity are the key elements in artwork. This piece is about encouragement and igniting a fire in you to find your

own inner spirit to fight against fear that everyone has in the back of their minds. As I was creating this piece, I was actually not quite sure on how to proceed for a while. I wasn't fully sure of what a phoenix actually looked like, or what colours would best bring out my opinions. However, I realized that I was wasting too much time thinking about the specific details. Instead, I decided to free my mind and go with the flow. For the atmosphere, I chose cold colours such as ultramarine, cobalt blue, cerulean blue and warm colours such as crimson and vermilion for the fire with medium yellow and purple at the side. I used these as I liked the contrast that they showed, as it also shows the contrasting sides of a phoenix. I used pouring and splash techniques to create this one. I used different paints as well, not only acrylic, water mixable oil colour and watercolour as well.

My Working Process

Since I like extravagant and contrasting visual impacts, I started this painting by pouring water thinned yellow ochre and purple first. The yellow ochre and purple are contrast colours. Then, I used almost every brand of medium of blue, purple, yellow and white. By pouring a little bit of water into the pre-gessoed canvas, they created a nice texture. I like rich layers, so the layering is very carefully planned. The last colour that I used was crimson, vermilion and magenta, and I believe that it really did it as a final touch to my piece.

Contact Details

- » Email: yuran527@yahoo.ca
- » Website: www.yanwei.ca

CALL FOR ENTRIES

HOW TO ENTER OUR ART COMPETITIONS

FULL COLOR DIGITAL PRINT-OUTS

Use the Official Entry Form over the page

ONLINE

Visit our website to upload digital files of the images you want to enter and pay for them using our secure server.
www.internationalartist.com

To upload your entries you need to prepare your image files to be at least 400 pixels at the shortest edge. Once

you are in the **Official Online Entry** page simply select which challenge you wish to enter then follow the prompts and finally pay the entry fee via our secure server. There you can also see other entries received along with past winners of our competitions.

CHALLENGE ENTRY FORM SCHEDULE AND CLOSING DATES

#	Theme	Issue	Closing
112	Favorite Subjects	IA126	May 8, 2019
113	Still Life	IA127	July 10, 2019
114	People & Figures	IA128	Sep. 11, 2019
115	Wildlife	IA129	Nov. 13, 2019
116	Landscapes	IA130	Jan. 8, 2020
117	Florals & Gardens	IA131	Mar. 11, 2020
118	Abstract/ Experimental	IA132	May 13, 2020



HINTS FOR PHOTOGRAPHING YOUR ARTWORK

- Set your camera to the highest quality available.
- Shoot your paintings dead square on and fill the frame as much as possible. We can crop out everything else.
- Take your paintings outside and photograph them in the shade. Indoor lighting can create unpleasant orange or blue color casts.
- To ensure crisp pictures, use a tripod.
- Turn the date off!!
- Rather than look through the display screen when shooting your digital pictures, use the viewfinder because there is less likelihood of the camera moving and creating a fuzzy picture.
- Make sure no clips or easel clamps intrude into the painting, and that frames don't cast shadows that fall onto the painting.
- Then print out your entries on photographic quality paper no smaller than 8 x 5" (20 x 13 cm) size. (Some papers have a yellow tint, which impacts on the finished result. If you are unsure, it might be best to take your photo files to your local digital photolab.)
- The full-color prints must be crisp and sharp, not jagged or bitmapped, and you must be happy with the color.

Please note that under no circumstances will any image supplied as a digital file on CD be accepted. Digital files/images must be entered online.

Being able to see the other online entries to your competitions gives me an idea of what my entry will be up against.

It's great to see your magazine using the digital technology to help artists be seen worldwide.

Because I am able to see the paintings that other artists are entering I am inspired to enter my own art.

I've always wanted to enter your competitions. Now I can.

Your online entry form is a good idea. I can even see the quality of the other paintings that have won previously.

I have just looked at your website and found out I can now enter your competitions online. Good news isn't it!

I am happy that your online entry form allows artists from all countries to enter.

Because our mail takes so long it is sometimes too late for me to enter. Being able to enter online certainly solves the problem.

Enter our
Art Competitions
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in the world

CALL FOR ENTRIES

ART PRIZE CHALLENGE SERIES

A continuing series of art competitions designed to encourage the best talent working in the world today open to any painting or drawing medium.

ENTER OUR NEW ART COMPETITION

CHALLENGE No. 112

Favorite Subjects

See your work published in *International Artist* magazine and also receive a 4-page Editorial Feature in *American Art Collector*, the prestigious magazine read by collectors and galleries looking for new art work in the world's biggest art market.

Winners and Finalists in our competitions don't just win awards to hang on their walls. The real value of entering and being one of the winners is that your work will not only be seen by hundreds of thousands of readers worldwide but also by leading galleries and collectors in America, the biggest art market of all. Our Grand Prize Winners receive a 2-page spread in *International Artist* magazine and a 4-page Editorial Feature in *American Art Collector*. Publicity at this level is priceless and could be a career changing opportunity for any artist, working in any two-dimensional medium.



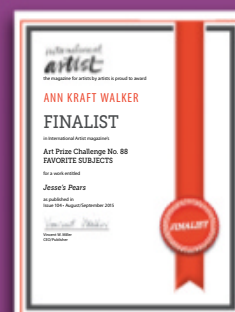
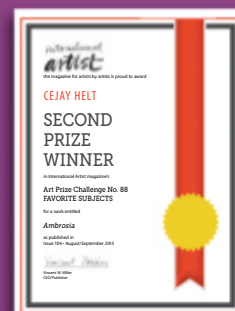
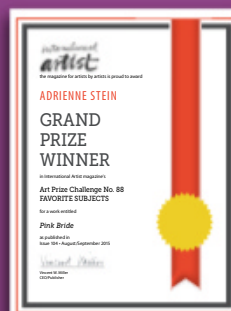
CHALLENGE No. 112

Favorite Subjects

Medium	Any painting or drawing media
Entries Close	Last mail received on May 8, 2019
Entry Fee	US \$9 / £5 / €8 / AUS \$10 (See overleaf)
Send Entries To	See page 24 of Official Entry Form
Winners Featured	Issue No. 128 August/September 2019 The winners and a selection of highly commended works will be published in our <i>International Artist</i> magazine Art Prize report.

NOTE: The winners and finalists in Challenge No. 111 – Seascapes, Rivers & Lakes will be featured in *International Artist* issue No. 127, which comes out in June/July 2019

Every winner and finalist will receive an Award Certificate authenticating their prize.



"I was contacted by a large gallery in Massachusetts after they saw my work in *American Art Collector* magazine. We have enjoyed a great relationship for several years now."

— Jim Seitz, Artist



GRAND PRIZE WINNER

Our Grand Prize Winner receives;

- An Award Certificate to authenticate the prize
- 2-page spread in *International Artist* magazine read worldwide by more than 150,000 readers
- 4-page Editorial Feature in *American Art Collector* magazine

American Art Collector is the most prestigious magazine in America focusing on traditional fine art—the art most people want. It is read by affluent art collectors and galleries coast to coast, all on the lookout for new artwork and new artists. Having a 4-page Editorial Feature in this art market bible is the kind of publicity that could change your career as an artist.

"In large measure due to my exposure in *International Artist* magazine, I have now had almost 6,000 visits to my website from all round the globe. Being in *International Artist* magazine has truly proved to be an international experience for me and I continue to be grateful to the magazine."

— Alfred Nichols, Acrylic Artist, Mississippi, USA



"As editor of *American Art Collector* magazine, I travel America coast to coast. Wherever I go I am continually told by many collectors that they have discovered their favorite artists in the pages of *American Art Collector*."

— Joshua Rose, Editor, *American Art Collector*



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2ND PRIZE WINNER

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- 1-page spread in *International Artist* magazine
- 2-page Editorial Feature in *American Art Collector* magazine
- Award Certificate

The publicity you receive through this 2-page article in *American Art Collector* could lead to multiple sales in the world's biggest art market.

3RD PRIZE WINNER

Our Third Prize Winner receives;

- 1-page spread in *International Artist* magazine.
- 1-page Editorial Feature in *American Art Collector* magazine
- Award Certificate

10 HONORABLE MENTIONS

Our 10 Finalists each receive

- An entry in *International Artist* magazine with their work seen worldwide by international galleries looking for talented artists to represent
- 1-year subscription to *International Artist* magazine
- Award Certificate

Read about the experiences some artists have had after their work appeared in *International Artist* magazine.

"I have been very busy since winning the Grand Prize in *International Artist* magazine [Challenge No.78, Abstract/Experimental, Dec/Jan 2014 issue] and having my work in *American Art Collector*. I have sold 17 paintings since the magazines came out. Some were sold directly from the article and others were sold at exhibitions just from the exposure. One lady said she had better buy one now while she could still afford it. A family member in Texas had told me at least three years ago that she would like to get a painting of mine "someday." Two weeks after the *American Art Collector* article came out she commissioned two paintings. So a very warm thank you for all your interest and the wonderful articles. I really appreciate it."

— Harold Walkup, artist, Oregon, USA



RULES & CONDITIONS

Fill out the form overleaf to enter your digital prints or visit our website www.internationalartist.com to enter online. Only entries on this Official Entry Form will be eligible. You may enter as many times as you like (see point 4). See overleaf for entry address details.

1. ELIGIBILITY This is an open competition - all artists working in painting or drawing media are eligible to enter provided they meet the rules. To conform with the spirit of the awards all work must be original and completed within the last two years and would not be disqualified if it has won any previous prize or award in any other art competition. No copies from other artists' works or paintings from other artists' photographs or from published material will be allowed. Source material must be original and available on request. No supervised work will be allowed.

2. ENTRIES CLOSE You must have your entry in by May 8, 2019.

3. DIGITAL PRINTS Digital prints should be printed on photographic quality paper no smaller than 8 x 5" (20 x 13 cm). Every entrant may submit an unlimited number of entries for each competition. **Please**

do not send original artwork. Pictures will not be returned, so please make duplicates for your submissions.

4. ENTRY FORM Mail-In Entries must be accompanied by one original Official Entry Form per artist as printed on these pages. A photocopy or facsimile may be used for more than three entries. When entering digital entries via our website, you must agree to our rules and conditions before submitting your images.

5. PICTURE LABELING AND SUBMISSION Each print must be clearly marked on the back with the artist's name, the title, medium and the dimensions of the work. Don't write on the back of your digital prints, instead, write on a label and stick that on the back. Only properly marked digital prints, together with fully completed Official Entry Forms will be accepted. For protection, simply fold a cardboard stiffener around your entry.

6. ENTRY FEE There is an Entry Fee for each picture entered in the competition (see next page), payable by Visa, MasterCard credit cards, or by check/money order, and this must accompany the

picture(s) and Entry Form. The Entry Fee is non-refundable.

7. JUDGING All entries received will be viewed and selected by the editors of *International Artist* magazine.

8. PUBLICATION OF WORK Signing the Entry Form will be taken as permission to publish the painting, if chosen as a winner or finalist work in our prize report. Any work reproduced in this way will be given proper credit at all times. Although every care is taken by the publishers to match proofs to the material provided, there is the possibility that variations may occur between the slides provided and the colors reproduced in the actual magazine due to limitations of the four color printing process beyond the control of the publishers.

9. TERMS Submission of entry in this competition automatically constitutes the entrant's acceptance of all competition rules. The judges' decision will be final and no correspondence will be entered into. Winners will be notified by mail and announced in the first available issue of *International Artist*.

OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM

THREE INTERNATIONAL ENTRY POINTS

For your convenience there are three International Entry Points. You can pay your Entry Fee by Visa or MasterCard.

1 USA / CANADA THE AMERICAS

Send your entry and payment of
US \$9 per entry/picture to:

International Artist magazine

Challenge No. 112:

Favorite Subjects

7530 East Main Street, Suite 105

Scottsdale, AZ 85251, USA

Enter your Credit Card details on the
Entry Form below or include a Check/Money
Order made payable to *International Artist*.
*(Checks must be in US Dollars and drawn
on a US bank)*

2 UNITED KINGDOM / EUROPE AFRICA

Send your entry and payment of
£5 (or €8) per entry/picture to:

International Artist magazine

Challenge No. 112:

Favorite Subjects

7530 East Main Street, Suite 105

Scottsdale, AZ 85251, USA

Enter your Credit Card details on the
Entry Form or include a Cheque/Money
Order made payable to *International Artist*.
*(Cheques must be in Pounds Sterling,
and drawn on a United Kingdom bank)*

3 AUSTRALIA / NEW ZEALAND ALL OTHER COUNTRIES

Send your entry and payment of
AUS \$10 per entry/picture to:

International Artist magazine

Challenge No. 112:

Favorite Subjects

PO Box 535, Frenchs Forest

NSW 1640, Australia

Enter your Credit Card details on the
Entry Form or include a Cheque/Money
Order made payable to *International Artist*.
*(Cheques must be in Australian Dollars
and drawn on an Australian bank)*

DEADLINE LAST MAIL RECEIVED ON MAY 8, 2019

Please send your entry to the Art Prize coordinator responsible for your zone to the address shown above.

FAVORITE SUBJECTS

I am submitting images listed below for this Art Prize Challenge and
enclose my Entry Fee for each entry as described.

**When posting your entries, please don't use
staples or paperclips on your printouts!**

*I understand these pictures will not be returned and that they may be
published, properly credited, in a future issue of International Artist
magazine. I warrant that the entries submitted are entirely my own work
and that I own the copyright on each, as well as copyright on all source
material from which these works were created. I hereby grant permission
to the publishers for reproduction of this work for the purposes of this
competition and agree to the terms and conditions as set out overleaf.*

YOUR DETAILS Please print clearly

Your name _____

Address _____

State _____ Zip/Postcode _____ Country _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

(So we can contact you if you win)

YOUR ENTRIES

ENTRY 1:

Title of work _____

Medium _____

Dimensions (H x W) _____

Signature _____

ENTRY 2:

Title of work _____

Medium _____

Dimensions (H x W) _____

Signature _____

ENTRY 3:

Title of work _____

Medium _____

Dimensions (H x W) _____

Signature _____

Don't write on the back of your digital prints, instead, write on a label and stick that on the back. Please do not use bubble wrap, tissue, excessive tape or
other elaborate forms of wrapping. Simply fold cardboard around the entry form as protection.

YOUR PAYMENT

Please find attached my check/money order for the amount of _____ made payable to *International Artist*

OR

Charge the total amount to my ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Signature _____ Expiry Date _____




Rosemary & Co. Artists' Brushes



Artist Jeremy Lipking painting with Rosemary & Co. brushes.

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— Jeremy Lipking, artist



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Five-day "Out There" Retreat / Acrylic and Pen and Wash / Craig Penney / August 21-25, 2019

Contact Details

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Paint: September 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 2019 || Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs, Friday
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Join us for this wonderful opportunity to paint landscapes with Susan in Rhode Island's beautiful Sakonnet Point. Susan is a widely recognized, published pastel artist, and teacher. Part en plein air and part in studio, from our waterside lodging location, we'll have access to sea, dunes, farms and marsh scenes.



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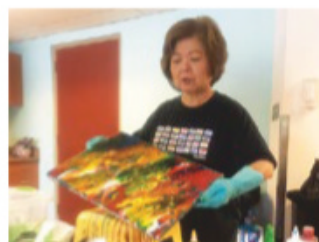
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DO YOU HAVE A LONG-TERM VISION ABOUT YOUR CAREER?

Insights on how to exhibit and market your artwork successfully By Graeme Smith

What if your focus is on an exhibition as one in a series of exhibitions? Most artists tend to focus on individual paintings, but an exhibition is a collection of paintings. This might require a different mindset. A career can be an ongoing stream of exhibitions, and you can be proactive about generating this income stream if you know what to do. However, you might not have enough time to do this yourself. You don't need to actually do the work, but someone does. The key element is finding people willing to buy your work; without that you have no future.

That is where you need to begin.

- » You need the sales and marketing strategies a major gallery provides to its main artists.

There's a lot of day-to-day tasks to do.

- » The more successful you are the more of it there is: meeting people, phone calls, entering competitions, framing, handling finances, etc.
- » Unfortunately, you'll have to do everything yourself initially.
- » Then your career path can open up for you.

But there are wrong ways too.

- » If you try to cut corners, it means 10 times the work in the end.

You've got to be patient, so do not rush into finding an agent.

- » Even if you do things right, you can't do them all concurrently.
- » That means there is no shortcut to success.

Once you've learned something you can build on it in ways not previously possible.

- » But you have to start with that initial learning.
- » Then relatively small ideas can become altered and improved.

Most people have heard of the downward spiral or vicious circle, but there are upward spirals too.

- » Things start in a small and insignificant way and gradually build and increase in momentum.

This happens as they link with an

increasing number of other ideas.

- » This upward spiral is integral to the creative process, as it provides the momentum leading to success.

So while there is no shortcut there is a spiral that you can climb aboard.

- » That happens if you focus on maintaining momentum rather than getting to the end.
- » Even with small steps the former attitude will lead to the latter attainment.

Spirals can be powerful.

- » They seem to fuel themselves and become self-propelling in time.
- » Successful people get more opportunities to be even more successful.
- » Those who need opportunities never seem to get even one!
- » Many people think this is luck, either good or bad depending on its nature.

But we make our own luck.

- » Good ideas can come from anywhere.
- » It's up to you to notice and be open to them.
- » You also need to harness them to your advantage.
- » They can be good painting ideas.
- » But career ideas are also subject to the same forces.

This momentum can accompany a career as it is rejuvenated too.

- » Change will build slowly at first but gradually gain momentum.
- » Other spirals interlock and momentum gathers more rapidly.
- » In time success is attained once more.

You might know someone interested in a book about art marketing.

- » *Enhanced Productivity* is about agents and making best use of galleries.
- » If they search the title on amazon.com an outline of the content is shown.
- » An identical version is also available from amazon.com.au.

Best wishes in your art career in 2019! 📺

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Sketching Irish Musicians

James Gurney brings his sketchbook to Irish music sessions to paint and draw action portraits from life

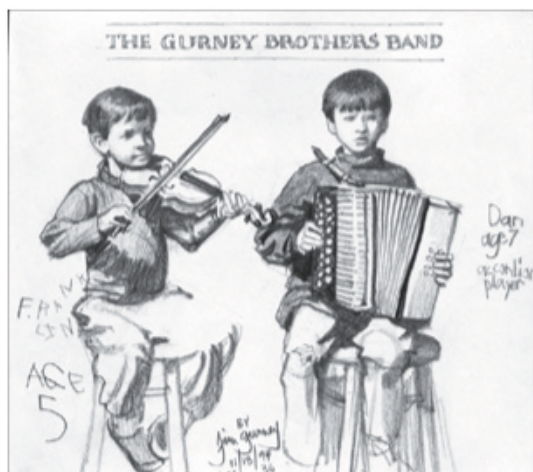
Dan Foley, gouache, fountain pen and watercolor pencil, 5 x 8" (13 x 20 cm)

At a house concert in upstate New York, I paint Irish fiddle champion Dylan Foley. Even though musicians move a lot, they reliably return to certain base poses. Before I start sketching, I watch him for a while to see what pose is most characteristic. I write his name with a fountain pen in the Irish Gaelic alphabet. Some of the action lines on the far left are drawn with a gray watercolor pencil.



Scan for VIDEO

Of all the forms of live music, the Irish music scene is ideal for sketching. Irish music is most natural in homes or in pubs, informal settings where both the performer and the audience welcome someone with a sketchbook. I try to get a seat near the front or at a small table with some light so I can see my work. My materials are simple, quiet and odor-free.



Sketches of Dan Gurney, graphite pencil, 8" (20 cm)
My son Dan learned the Irish button accordion by playing along with CDs starting when he was just 7 years old. I sketched him and his brother at home as they practiced and put on home concerts.



The Rhinecliff Hotel, oil on board, 9 x 18" (23 x 46 cm)

In the 1990s, a dilapidated hotel/pub overlooking in the Hudson River hosted some of the best Irish musicians in America, such as Billy McComiskey, Joanie Madden and Seamus Connolly. The concerts and sessions were arranged by Father Charlie Coen, himself an All-Ireland champion on the concertina and flute. While my son Dan listened to his musical heroes and eventually joined in, my wife and I brought our sketchbooks, both to pass the time and to capture the moment.



Jack Coen, graphite pencil, 8 x 8" (20 x 20 cm)

Jack Coen, Fr. Charlie's brother, started playing a tin whistle at age 8, and later learned to play the Irish wooden flute, playing on one he bought in a Dublin pawn shop. He moved from Ireland to the Bronx and became a key player in the New York scene, teaching flute and whistle to children in the community. Flute players usually remain in a relatively fixed position when they're playing, especially when they're playing into a microphone.



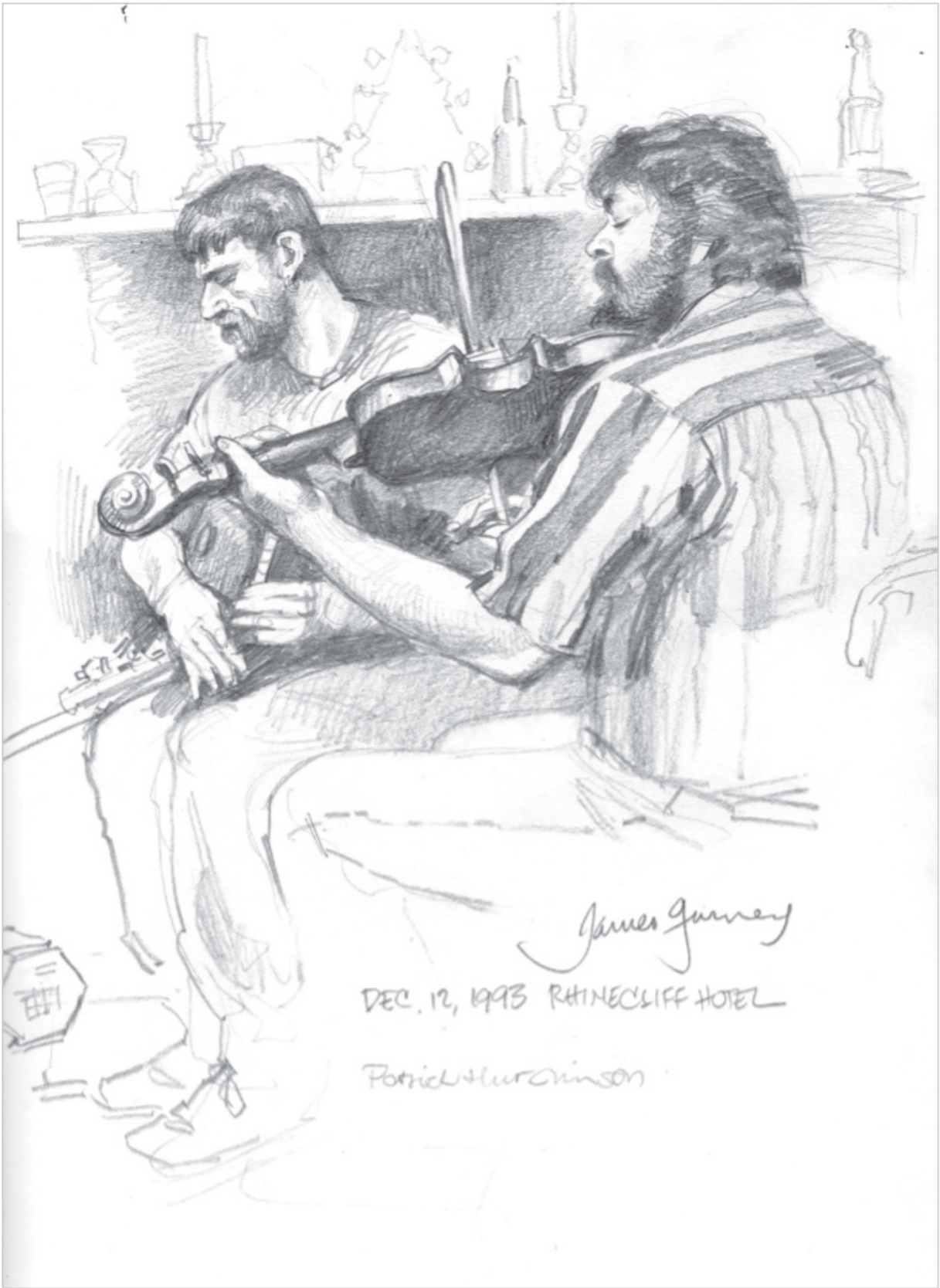
Linda Hickman, graphite pencil, 8 x 8"
(20 x 20 cm)

Linda is one of Jack Coen's students. She has played the flute with the band Celtic Thunder, performing several occasions at the White House. I sketch her at the Rhinecliff hotel, where a single light bulb provides all the illumination. My challenge here is to capture the big tones and shapes of her pose without overworking it.



Fiona Doherty, graphite pencil, 8 x 8"
(20 x 20 cm)

Fiona's fingers are moving rapidly, so I concentrate instead on her face and hair. I shade the tones with the side of the pencil lead and soften the edges between the margin of the hair and the form shadows of the face, saving the sharper accents for the eyes and mouth.



Four in the Groove, graphite pencil, 11 x 8½" (28 x 22 cm)

Two players overlapping each other gives me an opportunity to suggest the depth of the setting. Patrick Hutchinson's face and hands are visible behind the fiddle as he plays his uilleann pipes. I show just a hint of the mantel and the candlesticks in the background, which makes it clear this is an informal space, not a concert hall.



Josh Dukes, watercolor, 5 x 8" (13 x 20 cm)

At a pub in East Durham, New York, I paint Joshua "Papa" Dukes as he plays traditional flute and bodhran. In his other life, Dukes once served as a Master Sergeant in the U.S. Army and a drum major in the Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps, the official escort to the president. My perspective is close up, since my seat is right beside him. My sketchbook, watercolor paints, water cup, rag and casein paints are all in my lap. I'm using watercolor and water-soluble colored pencils for the warm colors, and casein for the white and black. Most of this painting is transparent, but casein gives me opacity where I need it. Most of the painting is done with a very large sable watercolor brush.

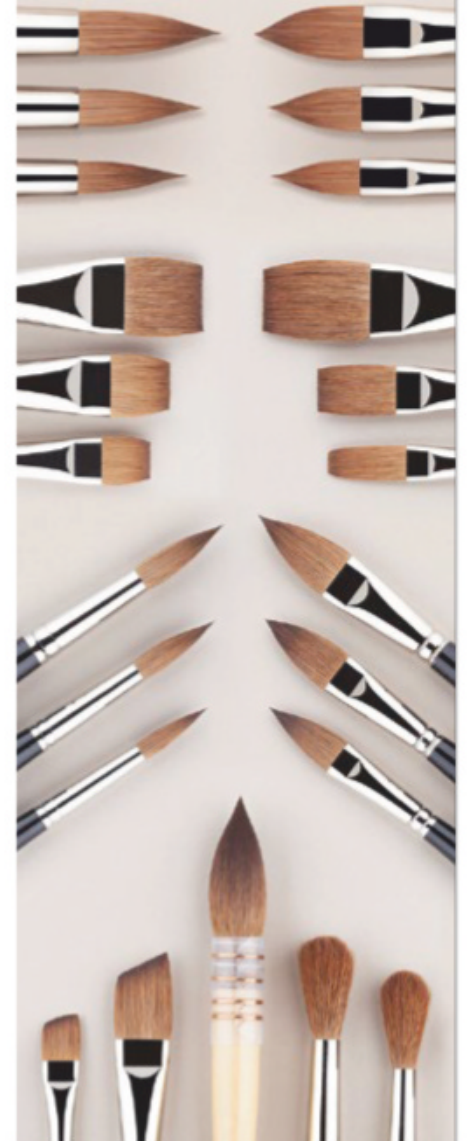


Joe Madden, fine-tip pen, 6 x 4" (15 x 10 cm)



Laura Murphy, graphite pencil, 6 x 4" (15 x 10 cm)

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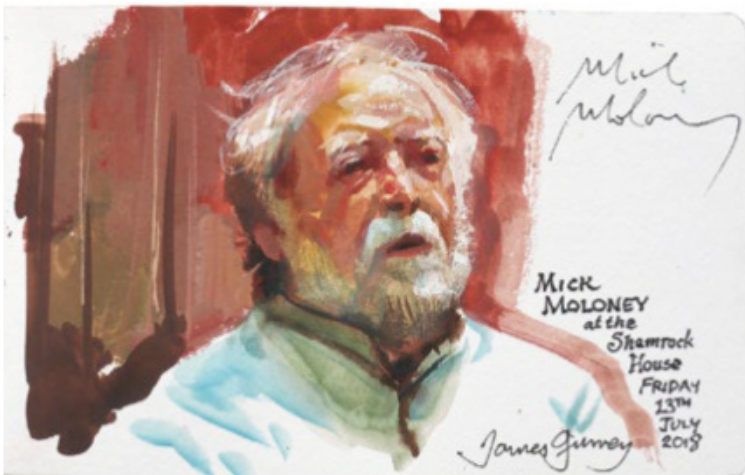
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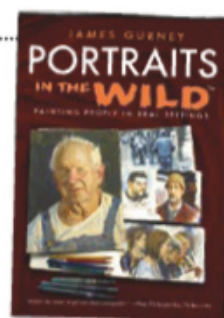
Fleadh Cheoil, pencil,
6 x 4" (15 x 20 cm)
I sketch these young
players at the All-Ireland
competition (*Fleadh
Cheoil*) in Listowel,
Ireland. They are on stage
for only about six or seven
minutes, playing just two
or three tunes. I'm sitting
far back in the audience,
so I draw each of them
small to explore the
variety of their silhouettes
and basic postures.



Mick Moloney, gouache, 5 x 8" (13 x 20 cm) Mick Moloney sings, plays banjo and mandolin and is a professor of Irish folklore and ethnomusicology. I paint him at what he calls a "listening session," an acoustic concert with traditional jigs and reels, songs, stories and step dancing. There's a single light on the wall above Mick, and the rest of the room is dark. I wait for him to return momentarily to his pose, immersed in song. I use four colors of gouache (flame red, yellow ochre, peacock blue and white). I hold the sketchbook in my lap in the very dim light, making it possible to estimate tonal values, but it's difficult to guess at the chroma or hue.

ABOUT JAMES GURNEY @jamesgurneyart

James Gurney is the artist and author of *Dinotopia: A Land Apart from Time*, which has been published in over 18 languages in 32 countries. He also wrote *Color and Light: A Guide for the Realist Painter*. Subscribe to the James Gurney YouTube and Instagram channels for regular updates about painting, illustration, sketching, comics, and animation. He has three paintings of a T. rex in the April 2019 issue of *Ranger Rick Magazine*. His video tutorial *Portraits in the Wild* demonstrates various techniques for drawing and painting people in real settings.



The Portrait Society of America

Chairman's Letter

What is a Masterpiece?

A few years ago during a get-together at a good friend's house, one of the guests, who works in the medical science field, announced to the group that she was taking a course on the history of art, and that she found it confusing trying to follow the "isms" of style and especially the "how and why" that some artworks were selected as great and others not. Then she turned to me and said, "Ed, you're an artist, explain to me why some things are masterpieces and others aren't because it's not at all apparent to me!"

All eyes shot to me, and I was on the spot so without trying to hide my stunned look, my first words were, "Hum, well yes that can be confusing." I was buying think time. "The problem with understanding art history is that it helps to think of the various periods as a reflection of the changing thinking and growth of knowledge within a culture. It's sort of like a pendulum that swings from one extreme to the other, marking the end of one period and beginning of the next. Therefore, great art is simply works that help move the pendulum!" "Oh, that makes sense," she said and moved on to another topic. Ha, I was off the hook, though I knew my explanation was one of those circular answers that lead nowhere, but I hadn't really addressed what was at the center of her question, "...What is a masterpiece?"

CliffsNotes with hard facts that would provide her with a checklist definition was what she was seeking, but in the creative fields of literature, music, philosophy and visual arts, getting the art



Rembrandt (1606-1669), *The Syndics of the Amsterdam Drapers' Guild*, oil, 75.3 x 109.8" (192 x 279 cm)

critics, historians, curators, dealers and collectors to all agree on the specific requirements of "greatness" would be a political impossibility. Provable facts may rule in science, but it's opinion that holds court in the arts.

"Masterpiece" as an art term has lost its original meaning due in part to the arbitrary way today's advertising media has used it in their constant quest to hype and sell-sell-sell.

"This fabulous new moisturizer is a masterpiece of ingenuity."

"Every work in the museum's collection is a masterpiece, not to be missed!"

"Step out in style with this year's masterpiece of haute couture."

The word masterpiece was born of the European Guild system and was the designation of a work that stood as the best example of an individual master craftsman within that guild. Guilds became the primary business structure of the time and lasted from the High Medieval Period of 1000 AD until nearly into the 19th century. They operated in a manner similar to present-day trade unions, cartels and professional societies with the purpose of protecting and maintaining a high standard of quality

products that brought premium prices. Guilds were controlled by those considered experts in their fields and often through political alliances they could hold a monopoly over their trade and ban competition by law for an entire city or region.

The Craft Guilds and Merchant Guilds made up the majority of the guilds, but there were guilds for other professions such as doctors, druggists, furriers, judges, notaries, bakers, saddle-makers, tailors, ironworkers, butchers, bookbinders and goldsmiths, to name a few. Most guilds banned women apprentices, but there were some women-only guilds like brewing, silk making and spinning and weaving.

If an aspiring young artisan wished to become part of a guild, then first they would have to be accepted as an apprentice where for several years of cheap labor they could receive food, lodging and schooling in the most basics aspects of the trade. If they showed promise and proved trustworthy with the guild's secrets, then they might rise to the level of journeyman. Journeyman comes from the French word for "day" (jour or journée), which means that they could be paid "by the day" as well as study and work under other master craftsmen.

The guild system saw its strength wane from a high point in the 16th century until it ran into direct conflict with preindustrial age, finally disappearing by the beginning of the 19th century and the rise of capitalism. We can still see remnants of the guild system in the master-student understudy structure that formed the basis for universities, colleges and ateliers.

Now we can see that a masterpiece should be a single work, or works, that stands out as being our "best of the best" and that demonstrates outstanding artistry, skill or workmanship and contains a unique and powerful vision that can touch and hold us to the point that it finds a home in our memory.



Edward Jonas,
Chairman



THE ART OF THE PORTRAIT

Won't you join with other artists from all over the globe April 25 to 28, 2019 in Atlanta, Georgia, at the Grand Hyatt Atlanta for the largest event in America today featured solely on the art of the portrait and figurative work? Whether you are a professional full-time artist, or you desire to take your art to the next level, we have a program to benefit you.

The weekend will feature demonstrations, personal portfolio critiques, breakout classes, manufacturer and exhibit products, finalists in the *International Portrait Competition*, a grand gala banquet and so much more.

Thirty-two faculty artists demonstrating and teaching include: Leslie Adams, Bo Bartlett, Suchitra Bhosle, Judith Carducci, Casey Childs, Adam Clague, Rose Frantzen, Max Ginsburg, Daniel Greene, Johanna Harmon, Seth Haverkamp, James Head, Jeff Hein, Quang Ho, Edward Jonas, David Kassan, Daniel Keys, Everett Raymond Kinstler, Ying-He Liu, Michael Mentler, Gregory Mortenson, Michael Shane Neal, Alicia Ponzio, Mary Qian, Tim Rees, Mary Sauer, Adrienne Stein, Dan Thompson, John Seibels Walker, Dawn Whitelaw, Lea Wight and Mary Whyte.

Gold Medal

The Portrait Society is pleased to announce that Dean Mitchell is the 2019 Gold Medal recipient. This award recognizes artists who have made



significant contributions to the artistic community as well as acknowledgement for their pursuit of excellence in their work. Born in 1957, Mitchell has been largely recognized as a watercolorist but works in a variety of mediums. His oeuvre varies from depicting urban life, southwestern vistas to intimate portraits of family and friends.



Excellence in Fine Art Education

The Bo Bartlett Center, located in Columbus, Georgia, is a distinguished educational center and gallery with over 18,000 square feet of interactive space. The Excellence in Fine Art Education award will be presented this year to the center, which serves the community through an array of exhibitions, concerts, lectures and films. In addition, a number of outreach programs have been established including "Art Makes You Smart" and "Art in Jails."

For more information, visit
www.portraitsociety.org



Dean Mitchell in his studio. Photo by Jacob Blickenstaff.

AMERICAN DREAMS, AMERICAN DREAMERS

The Art of Dean Mitchell

By Krystle Stricklin

For artist Dean Mitchell, the American South is a landscape of memories, some joyful and some difficult, and his tremendous body of work offers viewers a vibrant tapestry of modern American life. Working in watercolor, oil and acrylic, Mitchell's work covers a range of subjects from urban city scenes and Southwestern landscapes to intimate portraits of family members, friends and strangers who he encountered on the streets or in chance meetings—a veritable cast of fascinating characters. This April, at the Portrait

Society's 21st annual *The Art of the Portrait* conference, Mitchell will receive the Gold Medal Award for his lifelong pursuit of artistic excellence and extraordinary contributions to the artistic community. Recently, I had the opportunity to speak with Mitchell about his accomplishments and inspiring body of works. In our conversations, we spoke frankly about the lack of diversity among collectors and in collections, the systemic poverty and discrimination that plagues our country, and how his work often shows honest, yet

conflicting, portrayals of "The American Dream" and those who struggle to survive in an ever-changing America.

Chief among his list of accomplishments is the creation of a gallery named in honor of his grandmother, Marie Brooks. What's in a name, you ask? For Mitchell, a lot. He was raised from 11 months to 18 years by his grandmother, who was known in her community simply as "the cook." Despite criticism from friends and family who thought he should name the gallery after himself "so people will know it,"

The artist cannot and must not take anything for granted but must drive to the heart of every answer and expose the question the answer hides.

— James Baldwin
(1924–1987)

Mitchell insisted that it bare his grandmother's name. It is his way of restoring something to a woman who gave him so much and to ensure that her name is not forgotten. Mitchell envisioned the gallery as a space not only for exhibiting work, but also to play a vital role in the community of Quincy, Florida, through art lectures, workshops and for supporting scholarships for local artists. To give credit where credit is due, Mitchell eagerly admits that the idea for the gallery came from his wife, who for years had been encouraging him to share his amassed collection of work and find a way to give back to the community.

Born in the early years of the civil rights movement, Mitchell was deeply affected by the social movements and racial segregation that he witnessed and the stories he heard from family and friends. On his upbringing, Mitchell explains, "I grew up in the segregated South in Quincy, Florida—a small town where poverty and discrimination were an everyday reality for many people, especially for black folks." This early exposure to social inequity and racial prejudices informed his later choices in subject matter. He adds, "My work isn't about painting pretty pictures, I'm not that guy. I want my pictures to say something about what it means to be human—to struggle and strive. Part of America's beauty is in her struggles, and it's what makes us beautiful, as humans."

Among his works is a series of *Buffalo Soldier* portraits that depict modern-day military reenactors, as well as surviving veterans who



American in Black and White, acrylic, 15 x 10" (38 x 25 cm)

served in the segregated "buffalo soldier" Army units during World War II. These units were named after the segregated African-American regiments, which were formed during the Civil War. While historians disagree about how the nickname began, and whether it was meant as a derogatory term, there is no doubt that members of the unit (from both centuries) were often confronted with racial prejudices. On a visit to Fort Leavenworth,

Kansas, Mitchell spoke with one of the WWII veterans, Raymond Bardwell, who he later painted in several portraits. On his talks with the veterans, Mitchell says, "They told stories of discrimination, and their honesty about race and the military was difficult to hear, but I realized the only way we move forward as a nation is to address the truth no matter how difficult. After hearing them speak, I wanted to celebrate these men who had been through so

THE ART OF THE PORTRAIT

much and were still alive, still here and telling their stories.”

Mitchell’s attention to segregated environments and spaces pregnant with emotion and symbolism is seen throughout his works. One such painting is *Mr. Northern*, a portrait of a man named Joseph Northern, who lives in the small town of Greensboro, Florida, not far from the Marie Brooks gallery in Quincy. Depicted in profile, Northern sits complacent on his porch with his feet propped up in a chair and his left arm resting comfortably on the porch’s stark white railing. “There is a long history of the porch as a psychological space, and for me it was the place where stories were told,” Mitchell explains. He went on to describe the lively conversations and stories that were told on his porch growing up, specifically recalling discussions about the importance of education as a way out of poverty.

Reflecting further on the topic of America and the American Dream, we discussed his captivating work *American in Black and White*. His white and gray American flag softly swings in a doorway, framed in red and black. Mitchell says, “The setting for this work is



Raymond Bardwell, Buffalo Soldier, watercolor, 18 x 30" (46 x 76 cm)

the French Quarter in New Orleans, a place full of beautiful, vibrant colors. But I really wanted to show that you can create a thing of beauty in grays—to show the beauty of diversity, of black and white.” This brought our conversation to a personal favorite of his

works, *Power Ball*. After agreeing that it was also a favorite of his, Mitchell observes, “Isn’t this scene just so telling of American culture and the desire for wealth?” He describes how he came upon the scene while walking around the urban-center of Denver, where he quickly snapped a few photos for the basic composition and then worked from both memory and his imagination. In the painting, a tired man sits outside on a low windowsill, hunched forward and clutching a lottery ticket in his hand. A red and white Powerball sign hangs to his left, visibly worn-out and peeling from the brick façade. I’ve always wondered if this man spent his last few dollars on that lottery ticket. We agreed that many people define the American Dream as “success through hard work,” but that is such a simplistic view, and the reality is often much more complicated. And that is what Mitchell shows us in his work—the complicated beauty of American life.


Always challenging the limits of his knowledge and skills, Mitchell spends most days at work in his studio or on projects for his



Power Ball, watercolor, 20 x 30" (51 x 76 cm)



Mr. Northern, watercolor, 24 x 34" (61 x 86 cm)

gallery. Currently, he is working on another series of portraits of his mother, who is suffering the devastating effects of Alzheimer's disease. At the end of our conversation, we talked about how he wants his work to remind people of the fragility and brevity of life. "Everyone is born into a space and time, and we don't know what that will be or how long we have—but it doesn't matter," he says. "All that matters is what you do with it, with your time while you have it." 

Krystle Stricklin, guest writer for the Portrait Society of America, is a PhD candidate in the history of art and architecture at the University of Pittsburgh, specializing in North American art, photography, and the visual legacies of war and empire. Krystle received her bachelor's and master's degrees in the history and criticism of art from Florida State University.



Hazel Mae, watercolor, 15 x 18" (38 x 46 cm)

Master Showcase



Natalia Fabia

I'm OK, oil, 10 x 8" (25 x 20 cm)

INSPIRATION

The subject of my painting is my now 5-year-old daughter Peribeau. She is a very emotive, strong willed, rambunctious and whimsical little girl. She was 4 years old when I painted this, and she is always curious and adventurous, which can lead to mishaps, but every time she falls we hear her exclaim from anywhere in the house "I'm OK!", and that is where the title of the piece came from.

ARTISTIC PATH

As far back as I can remember I have been drawing and fascinated with the female form in particular. In junior high I would spend the breaks drawing my fellow classmates. There were always art books at my home growing up since my father was a wood carver for the last 40 years. My parents were always very supportive of me and my artistic pursuits. In 2007 I graduated from Art Center College of Design and began showing my art in exhibitions around Los Angeles. In addition to being represented by a number of galleries, I have been a painting instructor for three years in my private studio, at Kline Academy of Fine Art and recently Laguna College of Art and Design.



Daniel Gerhartz

Dancing on Air, oil, 36 x 40" (91 x 102 cm)

INSPIRATION

The life and passion brought forth by these dancers offered profound inspiration. In terms of subject matter, painting the human form in outdoor light has been my first love. Depicting the solid structure of anatomy accented with the surrounding opalescent light always provides a great challenge artistically.

ARTISTIC PATH

As a young boy growing up in the Midwest, I enjoyed fishing, hunting and playing sports. It was on a stormy afternoon when all the other activities were rained out that a friend suggested that we draw. It was this introduction to the artistic process that began my lifelong passion. I later studied art at the American Academy of Art in Chicago and had the privilege of being mentored by Richard Schmid. After a brief stint in commercial art, I have worked as a fine artist, exhibiting my paintings both nationally and internationally.



Anna Rose Bain

Silent Snowfall, oil, 36 x 30" (91 x 76 cm)

INSPIRATION

Silent Snowfall is a self-portrait inspired by a childhood memory. Growing up in rural Wisconsin, I spent many winter days sledding down hills on our 40-acre property. One evening as darkness was setting in, my siblings went back to the house for hot cocoa, but I stayed behind on my favorite slope in the woods. It had started to snow very softly. I lay down on my back and stared up at the tops of the pine trees, letting the snow land on my face and eyelashes. I remember it being so quiet out in the woods that I could hear the sound of the snowflakes hitting the ground. It was magical, and every time it snows that softly, I am brought back to that moment in time. This painting also evokes a feeling of melancholy, as I am no longer that carefree child, but a grown woman whose sometimes-heavy heart is juxtaposed by those snowflakes as light as air.

ARTISTIC PATH

I always knew that I was meant to be an artist. My childhood friends knew this too and would often rope me into illustrating their "novels" or drawing pictures for them. I did my first commissioned portrait when I was 12 years old. Even though I was primarily self-taught, I was motivated to draw and paint whenever I could. When I went to Hillsdale College and started formal art classes, I knew for sure that this was my calling and haven't looked back.



Marc Chatov

Braids, oil, 40 x 30" (102 x 76 cm)

INSPIRATION

Mary Cassatt's work has always been inspirational for me. My idea for the painting was inspired by her painting *Girl arranging her hair*. I had a model scheduled with this idea in mind, but it didn't work. Her face shape and gesture were not capturing my vision, so the canvas was relegated to the racks. I think a year went by until I pulled it out again. I had Genevieve, a great model with classical features, scheduled for a sitting one day. As we warmed up with gesture drawings, I asked Genevieve to pull her hair to one side. She did and started braiding it and wham there it was! I immediately went to the racks and pulled out the canvas to complete my painting.

ARTISTIC PATH

Academically, I studied at Georgia State University, then the Art Students League of New York under Nelson Shanks and Michael Burban. I am also greatly influenced by my longtime mentor Albert Handell. Probably the most influential education was from my father, Roman Chatov, and my uncle, Constantin Chatov, at the Chatov Studio atelier. I grew up in my father's studio—as a child I would draw for hours as he painted at his easel. Being an artist was not only an accepted profession in our house, but a preferred choice. He taught me early on to value my work—he would tell me to price my drawings, then later he would look through them and buy his favorites. I still have childhood drawings with prices written in the corner for 50 cents, 81 cents, etc. Later, working as his apprentice, I studied painting under both my father and uncle. So, my career happened very organically, I had my first show at a restaurant in Atlanta when I was 18.

Elizabeth Zanzinger

Plume, 60 x 48" (152 x 122 cm)



Painting is an exploration of the known and the unknown, which can be realized in a myriad of ways. When beginning a new work an artist may have an idea of the final result, but then during the process can arrive in new exciting territory. This can be completely unexpected, and for me, discovering new, surprising ways of making a mark has become part of my process. As an academically trained painter, I have always felt most comfortable remaining in the methods I know so well, which include careful observation and rendering of each element in the painting process. However, fully realized representational painting does not always interest or satisfy me, so I've been exploring how I can push up against my preconceived notions in realistic painting.

In my current series of work, I set out to explore these interests more intentionally by scaling up and working within a compressed timeline. By doing this I utilized the pressure of time to force my hand to be inventive, to let

go of the strong drive for perfection, and to focus on the image as a painting rather than a re-created picture of a thing.

STAGE 1 RESEARCH: When I began planning *Plume*, I first did some research on historical masterworks that might inspire my composition. I was focused on visual simplicity and how I could take a complex subject and create a composition that had its strength in design simplicity. The portrait of Mademoiselle Marie Fantin-Latour, by Henri Fantin-Latour, comes to mind, for its simple composition yet strong interlocking shapes.

STAGE 2 THUMBNAIL SKETCH: I worked on a small thumbnail sketch to plan major shapes. My final sketch doesn't look like much, and it only vaguely suggests the final image. However, I actually spent an entire day working through the ideas I had, erasing and redrawing through many changes. The thumbnail is only 4 by 5 inches, while the

painting is 4 by 5 feet. The thumbnail helped to direct my models when they came in to figure out our final vision.

STAGE 3 LIFE STUDIES: My friends sat for some life studies and this image shows a quick portrait drawing of one of their faces and hair in the correct light. For this painting, the reality of using some photographic references became necessary as my models could not sit for hours on end with their arms extended. I'm a big proponent of working from life, but sometimes it brings unnecessary complications. When this is the case, I have found it extremely helpful to stay open minded and gather from a variety of resources, from life and stills, to accomplish the work. I had a large sheet set up in my studio for the background, and partnered my life studies with reference photography to accomplish the rest. When working on big projects like complex portrait commissions, I have found this approach to be the best of both worlds.




STAGE 4 UNDERPAINTING: I then began to draw the general underpainting onto my toned surface, going straight to the point with paint. I don't use grids, but I did approximate some horizontal and vertical measurements scaled up from my references to keep my initial drawing from getting too wonky. For the underpainting, I used Rublev's Nicosia Green and Underpainting Lead White, knowing I'd be painting warmer tones on top. Using the green in the underpainting helps me bring out that contrast color in the skin tones. The Underpainting Lead White is a very fast-drying white so I could make adjustments quickly.

STAGE 5 FIRST PASS IN FULL COLOR: I am a very "direct" painter, which means that what



I observe is what I mix up on my palette and put down on my surface. I don't use a multitude of layered glazes and tend to work very alla prima, or wet into wet. My strategy for the first pass was to start in the area that I wanted to be the most important, and "finish" it as well as possible in the first go. I will often go back after a section dries and rework areas a second or third time, but my goal is to always get the most work done in that first pass, painting opaquely.

STAGE 6 MOVING OUT AND MAKING BOLD MARKS: The first pass took quite a while, but as I address every area the image began to come together. Working toward a finish, I make my way to the outer edges of the painting, refining areas as needed. I allow

mark making to become more important, and less about reality, more about the paint. It is difficult for me to put down a stroke of paint and leave it alone, but that is the best discipline in this stage. In this way I let the paint convey a different emotional quality, leaving some mystery up to the viewer's own experience. It is my way of telling the viewer "Yes, this is a painting." But no matter how loose the mark making appears, it is done with the same care and thoughtfulness that I give to highly rendered areas of the work. The pacing at the end slows way down. I often work in silence so I can hear myself think. I make a mark that startles me and I resist correcting it. It is a completely different relationship to painting at the finish and it excites me. 



SURROUNDED *by Inspiration*

*An artist residency
in the Eastern Swiss
Alps allowed for close
exploration of the
environment through
multiple seasons*

By Devdatta Padekar

I have painted previously at different places in the Alps across five different countries—Switzerland, Austria, Germany, France and Italy—but they were mostly quick painting trips. On all these occasions, I had not spent more than one week painting at a place. Hence, I wasn't really able to absorb the environment and observe the subtle nuances in nature that always interested me.

The NAIRS Artist Residency Fellowship in Scuol, Switzerland, gave me an opportunity to paint in a peaceful place in the lower Engadine valley in midst of the Eastern Swiss Alps with a free




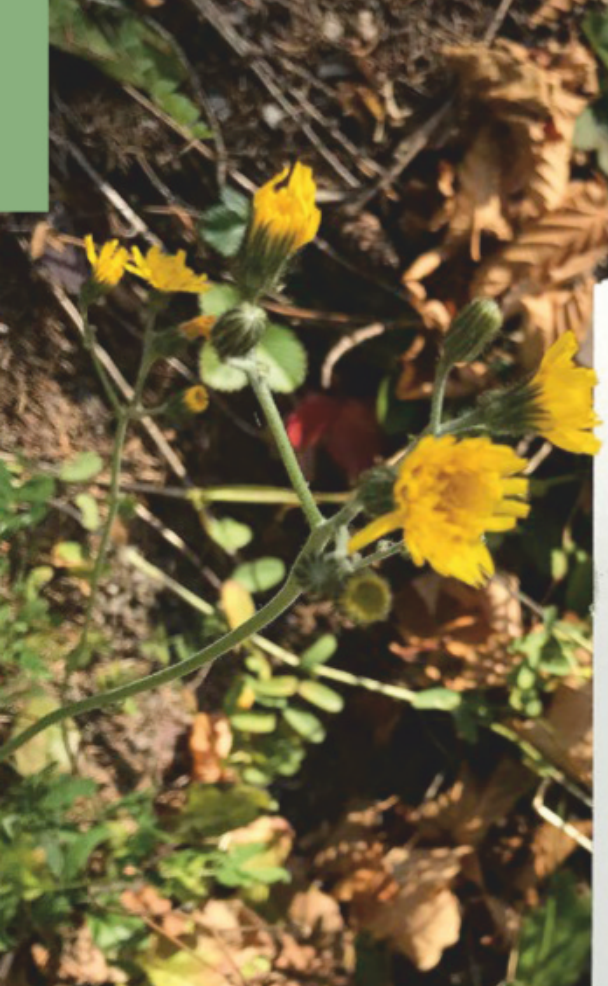
private studio and an accommodation for two and half months, from September 15 through November 30, 2018. Hence, I was fully able to absorb in the rich natural environs that surrounded this vast valley and it became the source of inspiration for my paintings.

Mostly devoid of human presence, except for limited presence in the small villages that surround this picturesque valley, the entire atmosphere was calm and serene. The only sound was of

the flowing Inn River that seemed to reverberate across the entire landscape. The river flowed in a soothing flow all through day and night and its flowing sound slowly became a part of my thinking, the river became a part of me.

In such a soothing environment as I painted, it was almost like meditation. It was a like a feeling of being one with nature. It also gave me a chance to witness the change in alpine landscape as one season gradually transformed into another.

I used to wander alone or often bike across pathways and forest trails, with my backpack containing my painting gear. I mostly painted small-scale works as I was painting on the move and had to carry light. In close proximity of the mountains, weather is mostly unpredictable; therefore, I had to be quick painting on location. It was also one reason why I painted mostly in watercolors. Often the subjects were suitable to be painted in watercolors too. 



Stage 1

I find an interesting part of hawkweed with its flowers and buds and paint it. I don't have anything fixed in my mind as to how I need to develop the painting nor have I given a thought as to how I want the painting is going to look in the end. I just go with the flow.

My Art in the Making #1 *Hawkweed*

Chief among the subjects that caught my eye were the wild alpine flowers that bloomed across the valley. In pure, crisp air and early morning sunlight, the flowers appeared fresh, vibrant and simply beautiful. I couldn't resist the temptation to paint it.

I painted these wild flowers in their natural settings and from life. I preferred painting them in watercolours because I felt it suited the delicateness and semi-transparency of the subject. My main interest was to paint these delicate flowers in an artistic manner and not in a documented or scientific manner.

Everything in nature is in a constant state of motion as new life replaces the dead. Every day, new flowers had taken the place of old ones that fade away. I found it very interesting as each day all flowers looked different, new and fresh in the wild.

My Design and Compositional Tactics

I was very flexible in my approach while painting these wildflowers plein air by giving more emphasis on overall compositional aspect as well as their individual characters. I observed each flower had a character of its own and my go was to depict that.

I think my flower compositions have that raw, natural look just as how I saw them in nature.

My paintings aren't carefully manicured just as plants in the wild aren't. They are free and meant to survive the harshness of weather and the sharp eye of birds and animals. This rawness and freedom is reflected in the plant and its flowers in the wild, I aimed to bring these qualities into my paintings.

What the Artist Used

Paper

- » 5-by-7-inch Fabriano hot-pressed paper

Watercolors

- » Alizarin crimson
- » Burnt sienna
- » Chrome yellow
- » Cobalt green
- » Green earth
- » Green umber
- » Gold
- » Naples yellow
- » Rose madder
- » Scarlet
- » Silver
- » Ultramarine blue
- » Violet
- » Viridian green
- » White

Brushes

- » Round sable hair brushes, Nos. 1 to 10
- » Mop watercolor brush

Additional supplies

- » Masking tape
- » 0.5 mm pencil
- » Eraser
- » Masking fluid
- » Water bowl
- » Rags/tissue paper



Inspiration for Hawkweed

Two nights of heavy snow followed by incessant rain over the next three days transformed the entire landscape over the valley in Scuol. It signalled the beginning of winter.

The neighbouring mountains were adorned with snow crowns, the earth was covered in carpet of leaves and only the brave flowers still stood the stiff resistance of frosty wintery air.

One among them was hawkweed; delicate yellow flowers that merged in yellow ochre carpet of leaves on the earth, yet it brought life to otherwise stripped barren landscape.

I don't know if it's a native flower but it is widely spread across lower Engadine valley and I loved this flower because it looked so delicate but had strong survival qualities.

Stage 2

I connect the buds, flowers and seed heads in tune with my visual taste in regards to the composition. The different stages of Hawkweed can be observed on a plant and I tried to capture them all in my painting. Once I'm content with my composition, I then move on to the background.

Stage 3

The background is done in my studio. I cover the flowers with masking fluid and paint the portion of background. I don't want to cover the entire background with color as it would lose that naturalness and spontaneity observed in nature. Again as per my compositional judgement, I paint some portion of background leaving other portions the original paper.

Stage 4 – Completed Painting

Hawkweed, watercolor, 5 x 7" (13 x 18 cm)

I soften some harsh edges created by masking fluid and to me the painting is now complete.



My Art in the Making #2 *Melting Snow*

Inspiration for Melting Snow

It snowed heavily...and then it rained incessantly. The snow began melting and the frozen water from waterfall had slowly started flowing again. That was the theme of my painting titled *Melting Snow*. I gave emphasis to composition and shapes in my painting. The subject was almost like an abstract pattern. Overcast skies, stones, rocks and ground were still covered in melting snow. There was softness in the subject. The colors too were subtle, except for the strong contrast of rocks met by flowing water.

What the Artist Used

Paper

- » 9-by-12-inch Arches Hot pressed watercolor paper

Watercolors

- » Alizarin crimson
- » Burnt sienna
- » Burnt umber
- » Cerulean blue
- » Green earth
- » Green umber
- » Ultramarine blue
- » Silver
- » Violet
- » White

Brushes

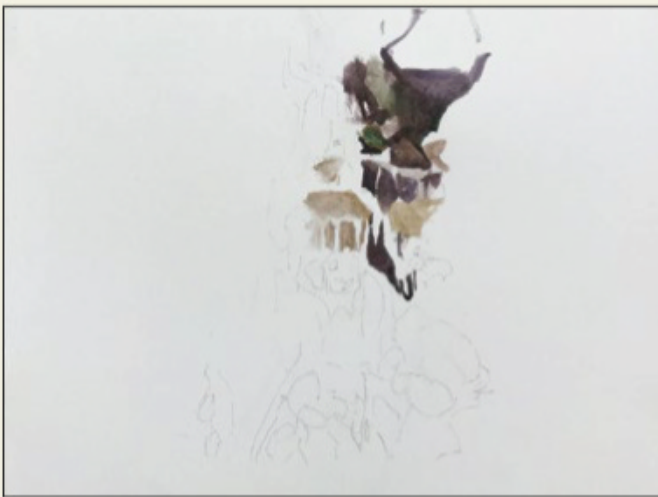
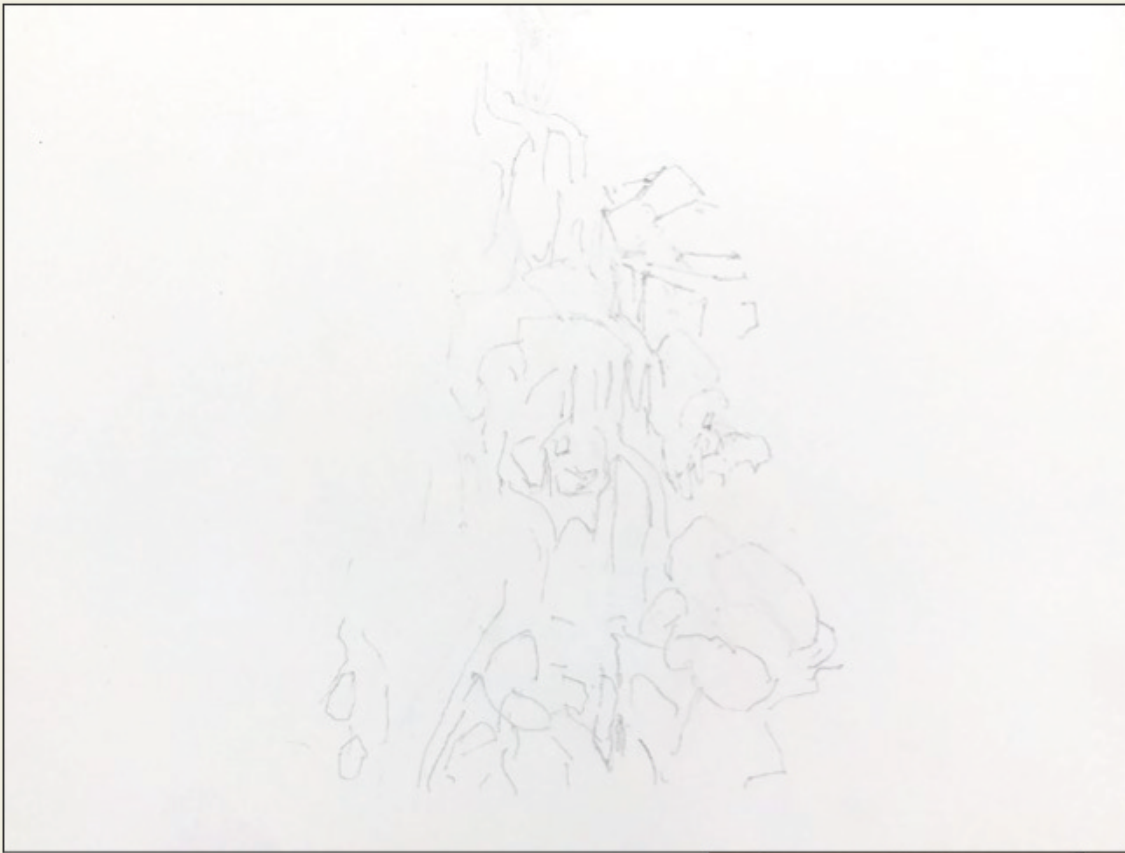
- » Round sable hair brushes, Nos. 1 to 10.
- » Mop watercolor brush

Additional supplies

- » Masking tape
- » 0.5 mm pencil
- » Eraser
- » Masking fluid
- » Water bowl
- » Rags/tissue paper

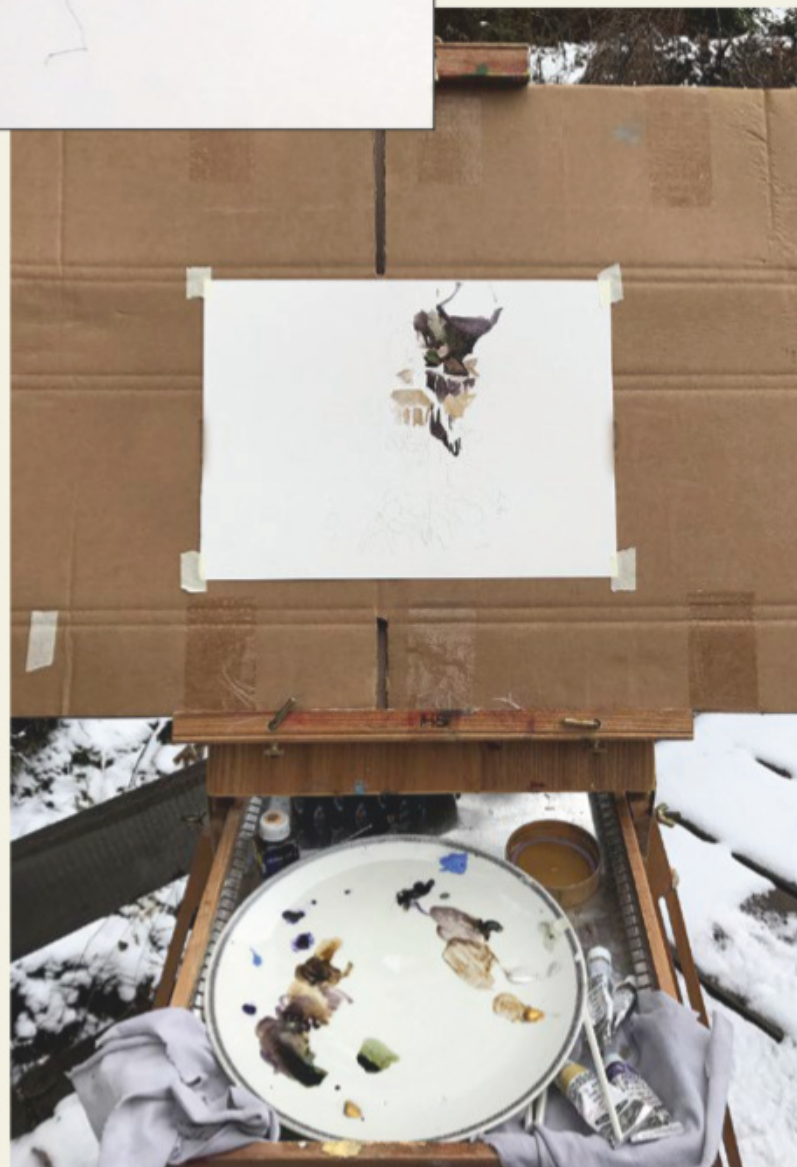
Stage 1

I found an isolated, unused bridge with hardly any human presence, hence it was the perfect place to paint the lovely waterfall that cascaded past it. I started with a light drawing in pencil.



Stage 2

Immediately I started painting it in watercolor. I intended to paint it quicker trying to get as much work done as possible on location, not knowing when it may start raining again. It was freezing cold too.





Stage 3

I like the way the water makes its way gracefully around the stones and rocks as it cascades down. I continued painting the waterfall and its immediate surroundings, some free of snow, whereas some still covered in snow.



Stage 4

Now I cover some stones with masking fluid before I work on the background. This is done in my studio. I think of painting some part of the background in dark to add more depth to the waterfall leaving other portion the original paper.



Stage 5 – Completed Painting

Melting Snow, watercolor on paper, 8½ x 9" (22 x 23 cm)

I add a few nuances of ultramarine blue to accentuate the darks that surround the waterfall slightly. I remove the masking fluid, slightly soften a few harsh edges on the stones and the painting is now complete. I then resize the painting as per my judgment of composition by cropping from all sides.

Golden Glow (Sgne) & Snow and Rain (Sgne)



Inspiration for Golden Glow

Walking across a wooded pathway, I came across a clearing. When I overlooked the rolling hill, I saw a beautiful small hamlet. It was gracefully surrounded by the golden glow of autumn trees and a majestic mountain in the distance was almost fearlessly touching the sky. The name of the village was Sgne.

As I saw the entire panoramic view of Sgne over the hill for the first time, I almost immediately fell in love with it and instantly sensed it as my painting subject. The view was rich in colors and the golden glow of the trees seemed to be reflected everywhere, even in the sky. I knew I had to paint it fast as the rich cadmium yellow color of the trees wasn't going to last long.

It was painted over three days on location with finishing touches to be added in studio.

Inspiration for Snow and Rain

A month later when it snowed and the weather changed, I visited the same place again and saw the change in topography and I thought: "Well, it's looking equally as

beautiful as it was in autumn. I think I should paint it now too with the snow and the winter atmosphere so very visible."

The only problem was after it had snowed heavily, it had begun raining and the rains were melting the snow. The rain is also the worst time to paint outdoors for obvious reasons, but I had to take my chance. So I went on location for couple of days and painted for around one and half hours each day. I tried to get the essence of the subject and the atmosphere as fast I could.

In the mountains, atmosphere keeps changing rapidly; often it creates special effects that unfold before my eyes. I enjoy the visual beauty in nature, the freedom and the unpredictability of nature. That's the reason I always enjoy working plein air.

Finishing touches, are still to be done in the studio.

The Works

Once they are completed, *Golden Glow* and *Snow and Rain* will be paired together as a diptych. The paintings will measure 13 by 23 inches each.

What the Artist Used

Oils

- » Alizarin crimson
- » Burnt sienna
- » Cadmium scarlet
- » Cadmium yellow
- » Flake white
- » Flesh tint
- » Indigo
- » Naples yellow
- » Naples yellow light
- » Royal blue
- » Turquoise blue
- » Ultramarine violet
- » Viridian green

Brushes

- » Flat soft hair bristles from 12 mm to 40 mm thickness
- » Round sable hair, Nos.1 to 10.

Additional materials

- » Turpentine
- » Cotton rags
- » Painting knife
- » A small squeeze



Here I am working on *Golden Glow*, which is still being finished in my studio.



I began *Snow and Rain* on location in Sgine, and will be working on the finishing touches in studio.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Born in Mumbai, India, in 1978, Devdatta Padekar studied at Sir J.J. School of Art, Mumbai, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting in 1999, followed by a Master of Fine Arts in Portraiture in 2001.

On both occasions, he stood first with distinction. He later won the British Chevening Scholarship and earned a Master of Art in Drawing in 2005 from Camberwell College of Arts in London.

A full-time painter, Padekar gets his greatest inspiration from nature and his paintings highlight its beauty and sensitivity. He travels and paints

in different places around the world on themes in nature that inspire and challenge him as an artist.

Padekar has won several awards nationally and internationally. He is also the recipient of Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation Award, Canada in 2006. He has had 11 solo shows to date and his works are in collection of National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai and in private collections in India and abroad. He is represented by Gallerie Ganesha, New Delhi and Tao Art Gallery, Mumbai.

Contact at ddpadekar@yahoo.co.in





Slawa Radziszewska

Finding Your Way

Slawa Radziszewska discusses her painting process and how to overcome painting challenges

What I would like to share about my painting process is not as much about how I paint, although that is addressed in the next section of the article, but how to keep painting despite difficulties all artists are facing in creating art. There is a lot to learn in the area of representational art, but what an artist really needs—besides some talent, good creative skills, willingness to learn and a lot of practice—is encouragement.

You have to encourage yourself to keep going in spite of all roadblocks and difficulties you will face in the process of creating a good painting. Otherwise, you would throw your brushes away and use your free time to do something less challenging and maybe less fulfilling in the long term. The encouragement may come from others, but even more importantly, it should be coming from inside yourself.

As children we created art freely and joyfully, but after becoming adults many of us turned creativity into competition, hard work and

Chelsea as Leo Zodiac Sign, oil on panel, 24 x 18" (61 x 46 cm)

This is a commissioned zodiac portrait. As Chelsea posed in my studio and I took photos for the painting, I could tell that she was the embodiment of Leo: royal at heart, confident and eager for fun. Leo's astrological symbol is the lion, so here I painted a lioness with a cub to add a more feminine touch to the scene. Red colors and the sun in the painting are symbols for Leo, as it is a fire sign.





Taejin as Korean Bride, oil on canvas, 20 x 16" (51 x 41 cm)

This portrait of my daughter-in-law was a composite of two photos from her traditional Korean wedding. I started toning the canvas with a grayed down green, complementary to the skin color and her outfit. I wiped off the excess wet paint with a paper towel and began sketching her face using a small, flat brush loaded with a mixture of diluted green and crimson. I usually draw freehand with a small brush directly on the canvas and take measurements with the proportional divider along the way. The challenge and the joy here was to paint the rich pattern of her costume and the headdress. I painted it with undiluted paint, which was opaque enough to cover the strong color laid down earlier.

lots of struggle. Or we stopped doing it altogether. Instead of encouraging ourselves to try again, make mistakes and learn from them, we started to criticize each step along the creative process and compare ourselves with others unfavorably.

My inner critic was especially vicious. A long time ago, back when I was living in Poland, I didn't even try to get into an art school, although I always wanted to be an artist. I went on to study physics. Not a bad choice, because I love science, but art had to wait for me to change inside. We all have unique gifts to share with the world, and I'm sure life will make us use them for the greater good at some point. I graduated with a master's

degree in physics and worked for many years as a science teacher. The desire to do art was burning inside, so occasionally I made illustrations for magazines and developed visual teaching aids for my students, which brought me an award from the department of education.

Then, the big change in my life happened. I came to the United States to work part time as a research assistant. My husband at that time encouraged me to switch careers from science to art, and he was willing to cover living expenses while I started to paint portraits. It was a bumpy journey. I had to fight with my own demons of low self-esteem, excessive need for approval and lack of trust in my own judgment;



Mark as Gemini Zodiac Sign, oil on panel, 24 x 18" (61 x 46 cm)

My son's zodiac sign is Gemini. As the reference for this zodiac portrait, I combined two photos of him when he was still in college. The Gemini archetypes are "Tricky Twins," so I painted him as such. Fortunately, in real life there is only one of him. I tried to capture his personality in the painting, which happens to be typical for the Gemini zodiac sign. He is driven by a need to learn new things, loves to go to new places and is fun to be around.

not to mention I had to learn a lot in the vast area of the artistic trade.

As soon as I gained some confidence in painting portraits, and was even nicely paid for the job, life came up with a new challenge for me. I got the commission from a prestigious client. His idea was to create a series of paintings illustrating the life of Jesus as it was told in *The Urantia Book*. I almost declined. I'm glad I didn't. The project seemed to be quite difficult, beyond what I had painted so far, but this time I knew how to encourage myself. With the understanding that what each artist creates will be uniquely different from other artists, and that's the point, I stopped comparing myself to others.

My client had a specific vision for each painting. I had to combine his vision with my own. Although I hired models, I still had to change their features in the painting to fit characters in the story. The new challenge was a great learning opportunity. Thanks to it, I had stretched beyond my limitations and gained new skills. Over several years, I created 11 large paintings for my client. He also collected paintings for this project from many exceptional artists. All paintings will be soon shown in the new book *The Untold Story of Jesus*, which is now in printing.

In my free time between commissions, the idea of zodiac portraits came to me. I thought, "Why not show in a symbolic way the personality traits of a person representing his or her zodiac sign in a painting?" Astrology tells us that every sign has a different set of character traits. I strongly believe we all have some good qualities of which we are not even aware. Zodiac portraits can remind us about our strengths.


A clear, Colorado night sky offers a beautiful view of star constellations. Based on the actual zodiac constellation shape, as you can see it in the sky, I drew a symbolic representation of each zodiac sign. Then I came up with the composition for my zodiac paintings. I painted deep space with stars, nebulas

and stardust for the background, including the star constellation of the chosen zodiac. There is also a part of the gold wheel with the zodiac symbols all around and a person representing the characteristics of the zodiac sign is placed in the foreground. An image of the celestial body associated with the chosen zodiac sign is in the corner.

The models for my zodiac paintings were all around me. I have painted zodiac portraits of family members and friends, and sometimes the embodiment of a particular zodiac sign came directly from my imagination. After painting all 12 zodiac signs, I began to receive commissions for zodiac portraits.

For the demonstration in this article, I decided to paint the portrait of my daughter-in-law, Taejin, as Sagittarius. This is her zodiac sign. I can see in her all the good characteristics of

Sagittarius: setting goals, aiming high, being persistent and expanding beyond her limitations. She posed for me as an archer, a symbolic image of the sign. The process of creating my zodiac portraits is similar to my style of painting any other representational art.

My paintings are a result of a long process of expanding my knowledge in representational art: practicing drawing and painting on a daily basis, trying out new methods, and most importantly learning to accept myself and the gifts I was meant to share through my work. Creating art is a challenging and exciting journey. What has helped me might be useful for you too. Here is my main art principle: Believe in yourself. Be grateful for your gift and share it with others. Don't criticize yourself, instead learn new skills and strive to go beyond your limitations. 

Peekaboo, oil on canvas, 12 x 9" (30 x 23 cm)

When my granddaughter was about 3 years old she loved to hide in the backdoor curtains and play peekaboo. I had my camera handy and got a nice photo of her. I started the painting as a demo for my students in the class. After toning the canvas with a thin layer of my lavender background color, I drew the head with diluted burnt umber adding dark shadows with the same color. In this stage of painting I already tried to roughly capture her likeness and get the expression on her face. Next, I painted patches of opaque skin tones. The biggest challenge in painting small children is to capture their cuteness. I captured it right in the beginning, with the rough oil sketch in my classroom demo, then I lost it in the middle stage of developing the painting at home, while adding more layers of paint and refining features. Finally, I've got it back by the end.



Here is how my painting process goes:

1. After getting a commission or coming up with my own project, I start by imagining the finished painting. I know there will be changes along the way as the process of trial and error will take place, but I still need to know where I am going.
2. Next comes gathering reference material for the project. I draw or paint portraits from life or photos. Painting from life happens mostly as a demo in my art classes when we have a model. When working for a client I either take photos by myself or work from my clients' photos. The biggest challenge is with finding reference for historical paintings. I have to hire models and then use my imagination to come up with the design and a well-balanced composition for the painting.
3. A good drawing is the foundation for a good painting. I always prepare a pencil sketch and then transfer it on my chosen support or I draw with a brush directly on toned canvas.
4. I usually get rid of white in the canvas with a thin layer of color before I start painting images. Burnt umber diluted with paint thinner works fine, if I want to paint monochromatically first. For portraits, I like to tone my canvas with green, blue and purple shades, which are complementary to skin tones. Sometimes, when I have already tried the design in other paintings, for example my zodiac series, I paint directly with rich color on white canvas.
5. Painting skin tones requires paying attention not only to colors and contrasting values, but also to the different color temperatures in lights and shadows. I mix all the colors I see in my model and paint them in bold opaque patches first. Then I build up more layers of paint,



Kate, oil on canvas, 30 x 24" (76 x 61 cm)

It was a pleasure to paint her portrait. The sunlight coming through the window created an interplay of warm and cool color temperatures. I painted her skin color warmer in the places where there was a transition between light and shadow. There is a greenish reflected light on her skin and in her hair coming from surrounding areas.

6. Because every part of a painting is influenced by every other part, I try to cover my entire canvas with paint as soon as possible to get a better judgment of colors, values, contrast and composition. Here is where changes happen and I sometimes depart from my initial idea.
7. The next stage consists of refining the painting, adding more details, more paint and sometimes a glaze of warmer color.
8. When the painting is almost done I put it away. I come back to it later with a fresh eye. This helps me to spot what still needs some improvement.
9. After the paint is dry to touch I usually cover the entire painting with a thin layer of retouching varnish for oils. It makes colors and values stronger and more vibrant.

My Art in the Making

Portrait of Taejin as Sagittarius Zodiac Sign



Photo Reference



STAGE 1 DESIGN, COMPOSITION AND DRAWING

I already had the design for my zodiac paintings that I created years ago. Once again, I made a drawing of a golden wheel with zodiac symbols of my own design all around. Next, using photos of my daughter-in-law, Taejin, posing as an archer, and some other photos from her traditional Korean wedding as a reference for the dress, I made a sketch in pencil. It would be nice to have everything in one perfect photo, but I rarely have that kind of reference for my projects. At least my imagination and a good visual memory can come in handy and substitute for the lack of great shots.



In the close-up, you can see my love for painting portraits. First, for a better judgment of values in the face, I painted the background colors around her head. Then, with a mixture of alizarin crimson, yellow ochre, titanium white and a tiny bit of green I painted patches of her skin tones. Purple was added to the mixture for shadows in the skin. Lights were painted with titanium white, cadmium lemon and a tiny bit of cadmium orange. The reflected light in the reference photo was green, but because I had changed her dress in the painting, I used some burnt sienna for the reddish reflected light under Taejin's chin.

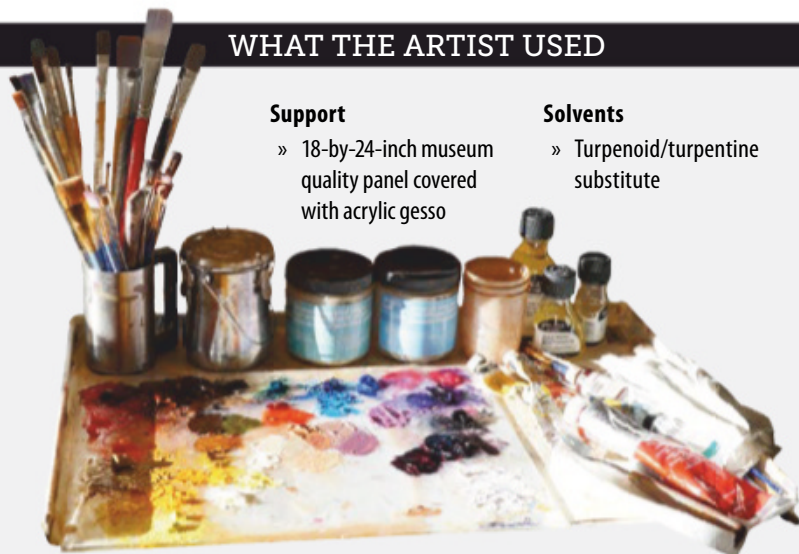
STAGE 2 PAINTING THE FIGURE

I chose a 24-by-18-inch panel covered with acrylic gesso for the painting. Using a pencil and a compass, I drew the zodiac wheel and transferred my drawings of zodiac symbols with star constellations into the smaller circles. The symbolic representation of Sagittarius is the centaur, a mythological creature with a bow and an arrow. I placed it on top of the zodiac wheel. Next, I transferred my drawing of Taejin. Then I masked a 2¼-inch border around the entire image. It will serve as the white mat when I frame the painting later. All my zodiac paintings have a similar design. I started to paint Taejin's portrait, adding a little bit of turpentine substitute whenever I needed to make the oil paint more fluid. I was using small flat and small round acrylic brushes for the details, as the head dimension was around 2 inches. I prefer softer acrylic brushes over bristle oil brushes. They are good for details and easier to control, especially while painting small portraits.



Continued ▶

WHAT THE ARTIST USED



Support

- » 18-by-24-inch museum quality panel covered with acrylic gesso

Solvents

- » Turpenoid/turpentine substitute

Oil Colors

- » Alizarin crimson
- » Azo yellow deep
- » Burnt sienna
- » Burnt umber
- » Cadmium lemon
- » Cadmium yellow
- » Cobalt blue
- » Dioxazine violet
- » Magenta
- » Phthalo blue
- » Phthalo green
- » Raw umber
- » Titanium white
- » Yellow ochre

Brushes

- » Medium, small flat and round acrylic synthetic brushes
- » Wide flat bristle brush
- » Small spotter brush

Drawing Materials

- » Pencils 2B, 4B, 6B
- » Compass

Other Items

- » Clear acrylic sheet as palette
- » Cold wax varnish for oils



STAGE 3 THE ZODIAC SYMBOLS

To create the image of the old, gold wheel with zodiac symbols I used yellow ochre, orange yellow, burnt sienna, burnt umber and green. The zodiac wheel was roughly painted at this stage. There would be time later on to enhance color and contrast, and to make the wheel shine with white and yellow highlights. Every value and color is interacting with other values and colors in the painting, so for now I had to switch to other areas of the picture. All parts of the design had to be covered with paint in order for me to see how they work together and what should be done next.



STAGE 4 BEGINNING THE TRADITIONAL KOREAN DRESS

In my initial drawing of the dress, I decided on shorter sleeves to show the arms of the archer. But after applying strong reds and blues to the dress I realized that both clashing colors need some mediator in a form of white or yellow color. At her Korean wedding Taejin was wearing a traditional outfit with very wide and long sleeves in many colors, including white. Not having a good reference photo, I had to use my imagination to paint these sleeves around her arms and to work them into her pose.



STAGE 5 CONTINUING THE DRESS AND ADDING THE BACKGROUND

I continued to paint her outfit using a mixture of cadmium red light and cadmium orange for lights and adding alizarin crimson with burnt umber for shadows. The blue skirt and belt were painted with warm blue and white in the light areas and cool blue with purple in shadows. I mixed my black using equal amounts of alizarin crimson and bluish-green and then I covered the entire background with a thin layer of that mixture.



▲ STAGE 6 MODIFYING THE BACKGROUND

Now with my paint still wet I wiped off some abstract shapes of light and color. There was some crimson and purplish color underneath, which came from my black mixture from the last step. The reason I mixed my black instead of using ready black from the tube is that with the addition of white, the mixture turns purple rather than gray. I could paint on a wet dark tone and it didn't turn my colors into muddy hues.

STAGE 8 ADJUSTMENTS ►

Here, Jupiter was painted smaller with four moons added. The abstract shapes in the background were getting more definition, turning into stardust and nebulas lit by the Sagittarius star constellation. Purple with magenta and white were added in the dark areas and deep yellow, cadmium red light and cadmium orange in light areas. The composition of the background had changed. Now the stardust arc behind the figure echoed the shape of the floating fabric and the shape of the golden wheel.



◀ STAGE 7 CONTINUING TO ADD ELEMENTS

Using cadmium yellow deep, lemon yellow and white for lights and burnt umber, burnt sienna and yellow ochre for shadows, I started to paint the floating fabric. I also made a little change to Taejin's hairdo and then switched to paint other empty areas. As soon as I filled in the colors and patterns of Jupiter, the planet that governs the Sagittarius zodiac sign, I realized the image was overpowering the figure. I also wasn't happy about the abstract shapes of stardust in the background, they seemed to be floating away from the image. Changes were needed as well as inner encouragement to keep painting and solve the problem.





◀ STAGE 9 DRESS PATTERNS

It was a pleasure to paint the gold pattern on Taejin's outfit. It reminded me of my first grade elementary school assignment to draw something between parallel lines after finishing the homework. I loved to do it! Connecting with my inner child I immersed myself again in this pleasurable activity. Highlights in the gold pattern were done with cadmium lemon and white. I used azo yellow deep and added some yellow ochre, burnt sienna and burnt umber to it in the shadows. The same colors were used to paint the yellow fabric, the archer's bow and the arrow. I added some purple to increase darks in the folds of the golden fabric and in the shadow cast by the figure standing on it.

STAGE 10 ENHANCEMENTS AND REFINEMENT ▶

With the composition, colors and values working well, it was the time to refine some areas of the painting. I added more shine and texture to the golden wheel, working in some places with a dry brush loaded with undiluted azo yellow deep and cadmium lemon, and for highlights with white and yellow. I enhanced contrast by covering dark areas with burnt umber again.

I also decided to add a gold pattern on the white, hanging sleeves. This was achieved with the same colors as in her dress pattern. I added more white with some yellow to light parts of the fabric while raw umber, purple and white was added to the shadows. Next came time to paint more stars. Dragging my finger across a flat bristle brush charged with liquefied oil paint I sprinkled dots of white and yellow on my background. Then with a small spotter brush I painted some bigger stars adding more yellow and orange around them.

Once again I went back to the face. I made small changes, covered some areas with more paint, softened some edges on her cheeks and added more purple and white highlights to the hair.



ABOUT THE ARTIST



Born in Poland, Slawa Radziszewska graduated with a master's degree in physics (theory of light) and worked for many years as a science teacher in her native country. Mostly self-taught, she made illustrations for magazines and developed visual teaching aids for her students, which earned her an award from the Department of Education. After arriving to the United States in 1995, she worked part time as a research assistant and in her free time attended portrait and figure workshops. After a while she gave up her prior career to become a full-time artist.

Radziszewska, who currently resides in Arvada, Colorado, USA, specializes in realistic portraiture, figure painting and other representational imagery. She works from live models or photos, using oils, pastels, charcoal and sometimes watercolor. Oil paint is her favorite medium.

She also teaches portraiture and oil painting

techniques at the Lakewood Cultural Center in the Denver area. In her classes, she often does art demos, which are helpful for her students in developing drawing and painting skills. Her regular weekly classes have run continuously for nearly 11 years. Many of her students are attending them on a regular basis.

She believes that we all have gifts to be shared with the world and the process of creating art can help us to fulfill our potential. She says, "It always stretches us beyond our limits. Sharing our gifts with the world can bring joy not only to us, but to others as well."

Contact at

slawara@gmail.com
www.slawna.com/wordpress

Find me on



Slawa Radziszewska



STAGE 11 COMPLETED PAINTING

Portrait of Taejin as Sagittarius Zodiac Sign, oil on gessoed panel, 24 x 18" (61 x 46 cm)

Now the finished painting needed a golden border around the edges. After removing masking tape around the painting, I filled in the pencil lines drawn on the acrylic gesso of the board using a gold leaf marker. After the painting was dry, I covered it with cold wax varnish for a matte finish.



Ginny Page

It's All in the Preparation

Meticulous planning allows Ginny Page to paint cohesive and dynamic compositions

For all of my paintings, a great deal of preparation and thought is involved. The most important stage of a new painting is by no doubt the thinking period before even starting anything at all. There are so many elements to consider. What should I paint and why? How do I paint it and on what and with what? Does my subject matter evoke a special memory or emotion? Will the viewer feel the same connection or familiarity with the subject? What kind of mood do I want to create? Then comes the all-important lighting, composition, sketching, adjusting, photographing and experimenting. Is there a story to tell or not, what is it that makes me so passionate about this particular idea and do I really love it?

The process of clearing the brain and letting your thoughts just “play” is of utmost importance to any artist. I compare it to a child spending hours arranging furniture in a dolls house and becoming increasingly involved and passionate in their little fantasy bubble. Once all the careful planning is decided the painting can begin. From that point I always feel like I can relax, and it is almost like plain sailing from then on. My larger works are always painted on Belgian portrait canvas No. 13. The surface is wonderful to paint on and the quality is fantastic. My smaller works are often on gessoed panels. I use five to seven layers of thinned gesso sanded between layers using silicon carbide waterproof abrasive paper grade 1000—and some spit and hand polish, which really gives a super smooth surface (and



Composition with lemons and bees, oil on Belgian linen, 60 x 78 cm (24 x 31")

These lemons were fallen fruits rescued from the kicking feet of visitors at a garden center. They were knobbed and “ugly,” with thick yellow skins, but very beautiful to me! I piled them into a beautiful glass bowl to reflect their beauty even more. One of the bees is alive and one is dead to remind us of our short circle of life and to seize the day despite “sour times.”

DNA). If gilding, I continue the layers with red bolus for gold leaf or black gesso for copper leaf.

I use different brands of paint but only the best quality. My brushes have to be hogs hair flats—here I prefer cheap ones that make a scraping noise and can push the paint around quickly. For finishing, I use the finest up to 10x0 tiny brushes for fine details. My colour palette is very basic. It includes three primaries, black and white, and possibly an earth colour or two depending on my subject

matter. My paintings are built up in thin layers of paint using many glazes allowing overnight drying between each layer. The most important tool for me is my proportional divider. I use it all the time to check every little measurement. I have several in different sizes. My day is ruined if I can't find it.

My paintings always start rather messy. I feel the need to “whack” on paint over the whole surface right from the beginning just to get rid of the scary white canvas. Instead of using a



All We want is Love, oil on Belgian linen,
96 x 134 cm (38 x 52")

The title explains the painting. It's about safety, contentment, warmth and the feeling of being loved. The woman is half sleeping but feeling the first warming rays of sunshine on the skin. This is a painting depicting simple pleasures, using a limited, uncomplicated colour palette. There is lots of titan white and ivory black used here with just tints of three primaries "dirtied" with an earthy brown.

grisaille technique as many artists do, I go straight into colour and block out all the shapes. In this way, I can get a general idea about whether the painting will work as a whole. I always "isolate" the subject first by blocking out the background whether it is a figure or still life. My brushstrokes are bold and broad in the first stages of for example a large figure painting. The overall effect at this stage is rather like a shoddily painted flat cartoon. In fact, it looks terrible!

Each day I add another layer of paint trying not to focus on one particular area as to keep a flow and harmony over the entire surface. After several weeks of blocking in, I gradually start to see the details and my brushes become smaller and smaller. It is important for me to sometimes see the whole painting from a distance then squint, then to go up close with my strongest reading glasses with nose up to the canvas. It is also essential for me to keep turning the painting upside down and turn it on every side,


The Broken Thread, oil on panel with gold leaf,
31 x 44 cm (12 x 17")

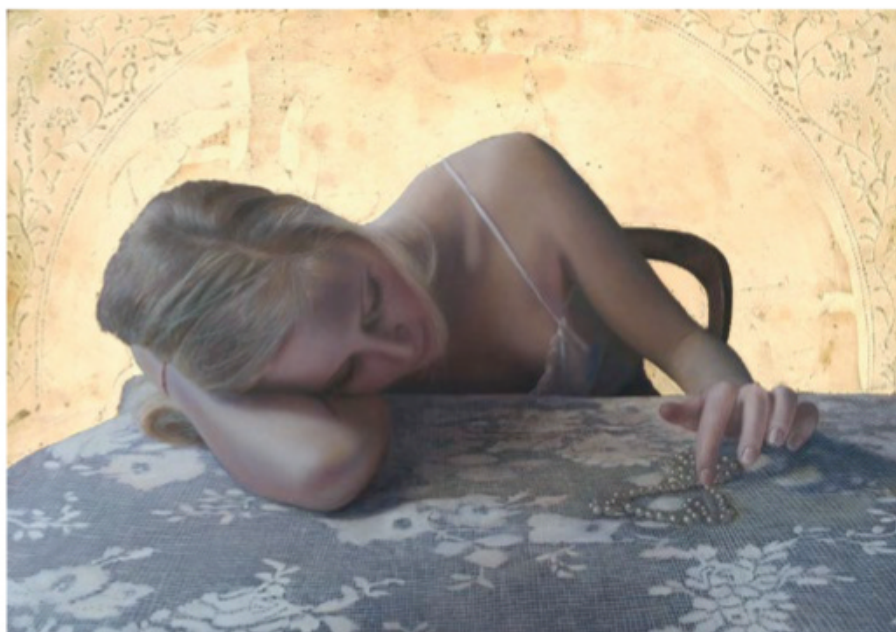
For the painting, I was inspired by beauty, youth, the fragility of life and how easily things can break. I tried to depict these elements by painting a fragile young girl in deep thought. She is leaning on a delicate lace cloth, observing her broken pearls and contemplating on how to mend them. I gilded and decorated the background to give the look of an ancient icon painting.

so I can "get at it" and see shapes and proportions from a completely different angle. This method also helps break the monotony if I start getting bored or can't figure out an especially complicated piece of the painting. Instead of getting angry, I move onto another area until I am in the mood to continue with the problem. I usually paint my figures life-size to give the impression that they are about to jump out of the canvas at you.

I must admit that I am a very unstructured painter when it comes to colour mixing. My paint is all over the place in no order whatsoever on my

palette, but somehow, I know where things are by remembering the shape and placing of the blobs. Having only few colours makes it so easy to find my way. I never mix large quantities and never clean my brushes when changing from one colour to the next. But my apron is filthy! The most rewarding part for me as a painter is to see the painting gradually come to life after many months of hard work and intensive observation.

The challenges of illusions in paint are endless and fascinating. For me there is no "recipe" for a good painting but I often compare it to cooking. A little of this and that until it suits your own individual taste. Painting for me is a sheer joy and a necessity, therapeutic and highly rewarding. I believe that anyone can learn to paint and draw but not without the passion, a loving eye and a good portion of "positive nerdiness!" 



My Art in the Making Come Undone



Photo reference

STAGE 1 THE SKETCH

I started the painting by adding a splashy abstract background with ultramarine, burnt sienna and yellow ochre. I changed the angle of the head and chair, removed the earring, then sketched the finished composition on top of the abstract background and fixed it with fixative.

I loosely sketched in paint (ultramarine and black) the basic shape of the dress and shoulder and included the buttons using a flat hogs hair brush diluted thinly with paint medium. I wanted at this stage for the dress to disappear into the background.





STAGE 2 SKIN TONES

I blocked in the pale skin tones in a watercolour like technique so I could compare the pale tones to the dark dress. I used titanium white, burnt sienna, yellow ochre and a touch of ultramarine here.

WHAT THE ARTIST USED

Oil Paints

- » Alizarin crimson
- » Burnt sienna
- » Cadmium red
- » Cadmium yellow
- » Ivory black
- » Titanium white
- » Ultramarine blue
- » Van Dyke brown
- » Yellow ochre

Paint Medium

- » Skovgaard and Frydensberg; A Danish brand of medium that is turpentine free and made from cold pressed linseed oil, light mineral oil, plus 3 percent cobalt siccative

Brushes

- » Hogs hair flats in different sizes
- » Size 0-10x0 round synthetics for details
- » Feathers and old toothbrush to make abstract background (spattering and mark making)
- » Flat varnishing brush

Additional Supplies

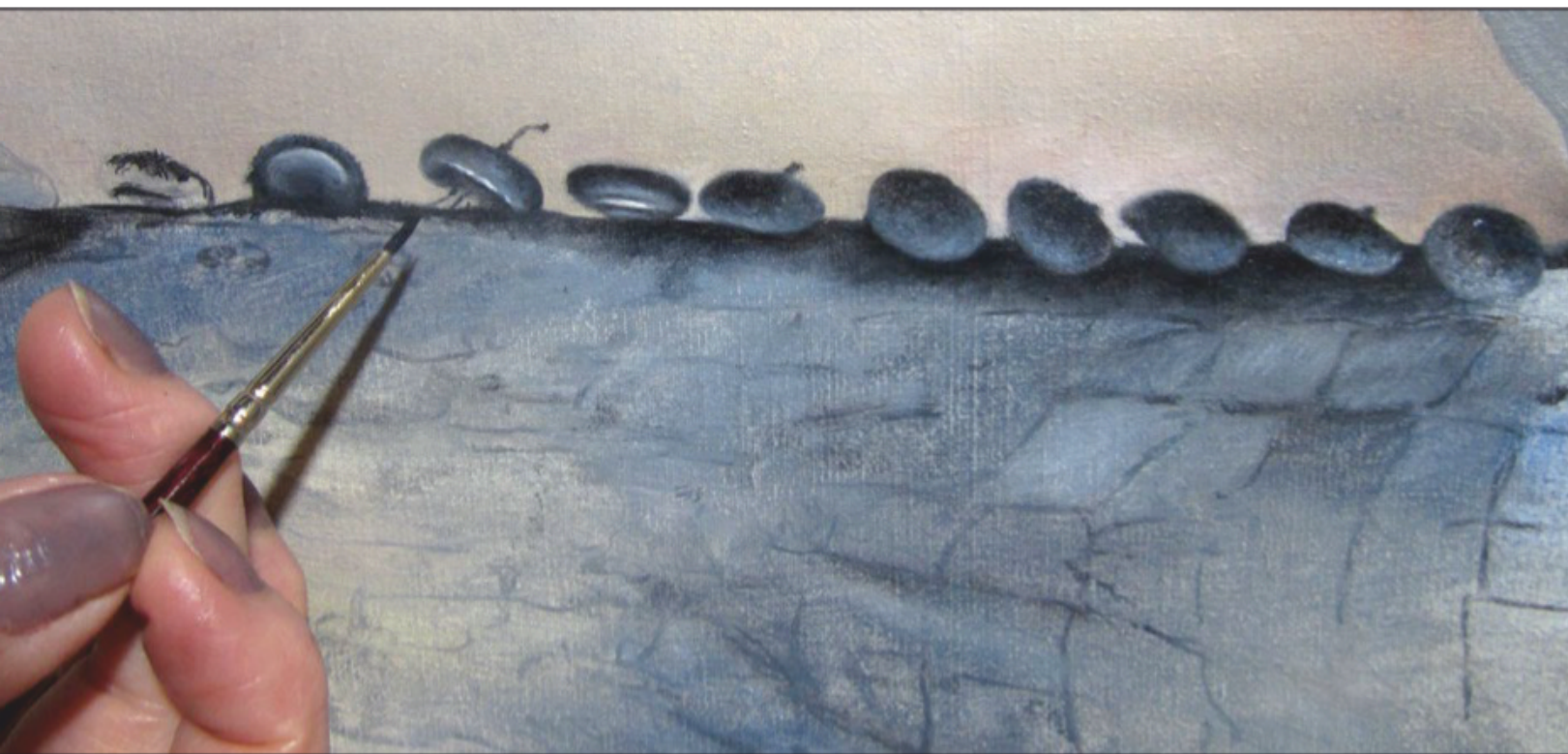
- » Soft pencil and rubber for the drawing
- » Fixative
- » Proportional divider for measuring
- » Cloths and toilet paper
- » Aluminum food tray with lid for palette
- » Dammar crystals dissolved in French turpentine to make varnish
- » Old stocking to sieve impurities out of varnish
- » Dead beetles (for the dress buttons)



Continued ▶

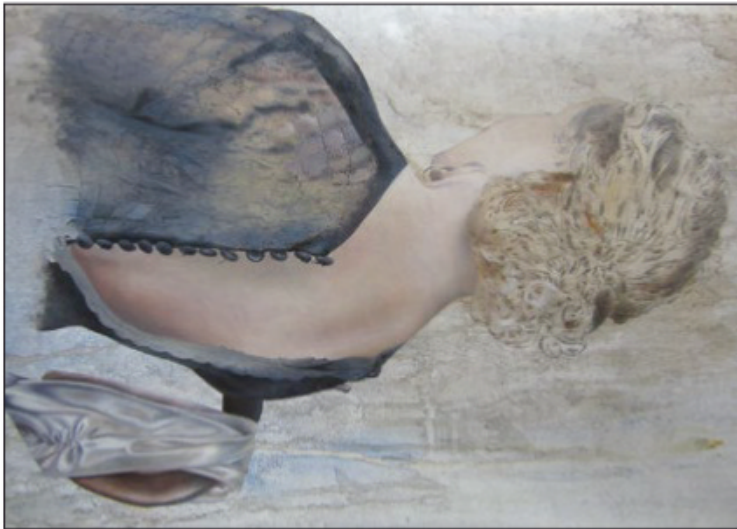
STAGE 3 AMENDING THE PAINTING

I gave the chair back a bigger gap between the right shoulder so lighten the composition a little and make the painting slightly wider. I roughly painted the first layer of the silk chemise draped over the chair back. I still haven't stretched the canvas onto the stretcher as I hadn't quite made my mind up about how far down the dress should go. Notice the creases in the canvas in the skin area. Not to be recommended—they were a devil to get out!



STAGE 4 EXPLORING THE ANGLES

Here, I already flipped the painting over, so I could see the angle of the buttons from a different viewpoint. I used a small brush here but still only two colours: ultramarine and black.



STAGE 5 FIRST LAYER FINISHED

With the painting still on its side, the first layer of thin paint is over the whole motif and I am happy with the composition, so far...



STAGE 6 THE CURLS

I am dying to get started on all the curls in the hair. It was like finding my way round a labyrinth of crazy plant forms—a place I enjoy being. I try to see simple light and dark clumps to start with and take my glasses off so I am not tempted to paint each hair at this stage.



STAGE 7 ADDING UNIQUE ELEMENTS

Now it is just a layer a day, and I am adding more and more details. Toward the end of the painting I noticed that the gray-black-blue buttons resembled beetles. The frayed strands of cotton sticking out of the buttons looked like the feelers and legs. I decided to transform the bottom three buttons into beetles busily trying to sew the frayed vintage dress back together again. Thus, the title *Come Undone*. I collect insects and find them fascinating; I set up dead beetles for the photo reference that is seen here.



ABOUT THE ARTIST

After leaving art school very speedily at only 17 years old, I chose my own path. I began customizing motorbike tanks, illustrating books, magazines and designing greetings cards with a specialization in botanicals and wildlife. I was a watercolourist up until 1999. Between working as an independent painting restorer over a 10-year period, and as a decorative painter (marbling, faux effects, Trompe l'Oeil, gilding) plus teaching art, I decided to focus solely on my oil painting.

I have exhibited in many galleries in Denmark and abroad, including the Karen Blixen Museum with a solo exhibition of bird studies from life, in pencil, gouache and egg tempera. I am a four-time finalist of Portrait Now, which is the Scandinavian version of BP portrait competition, and many other exhibitions and publications specializing in both realism and surrealism including International Artist.

I've been working as an independent artist in my own home for more than 32 years and besides creating my own contemporary works, I paint portraits and other commissioned works.



Contact at
www.ginnypage.dk

Find me on



/ginnypageart



@ginny_page_art



STAGE 8 FINAL PAINTING

Come Undone, oil on canvas, 78 x 60 cm (31 x 24")



Sasha Sokolova

Direct Painting

Sasha Sokolova's dynamic compositions develop through intuition by letting her brushstrokes take the lead

I love to paint from nature and I love the challenge of plein air, but with portraiture, I only work in the studio and I have to say it's my favourite subject. It's exciting when you not only show the likeness of a portrayed person but go deeper and show their real character and thoughts, so the viewer can know the person without having met them.

My grandfather is an artist and my father is a photographer so my work methods reflect this. I am always taking photos, even just with my phone, sometimes for inspiration, sometimes for future reference. Other times I will shoot specifically for a series like this one. I used a high-end CSC camera and exposure bracketing to catch different details, shadows and structure. These photos become references for my



Pool 2, oil on canvas, 70 x 100 cm (28 x 39")

I painted this piece in tandem with the one in the demo. This one features the heat and strength of the sunset, and I love the body position. I used a little bit of texture on the water to give the movement of water circles from the body breaking the surface. The water is very stylised yet still gives you the sense of reality. I think the distorted body under the water looks a little like it's a mermaid.

Pool 3, oil on canvas, 100 x 70 cm (39 x 28")

Here I chose a vibrant orange colour to complement the blue of the water, and I concentrated on the arms to give the sense of the strength and energy of the body.





Pool 1, oil on canvas, 80 x 100 cm (31 x 39")

Here the girl is the only realistic part, and the pool deck is abstracted with the bright blue sky.

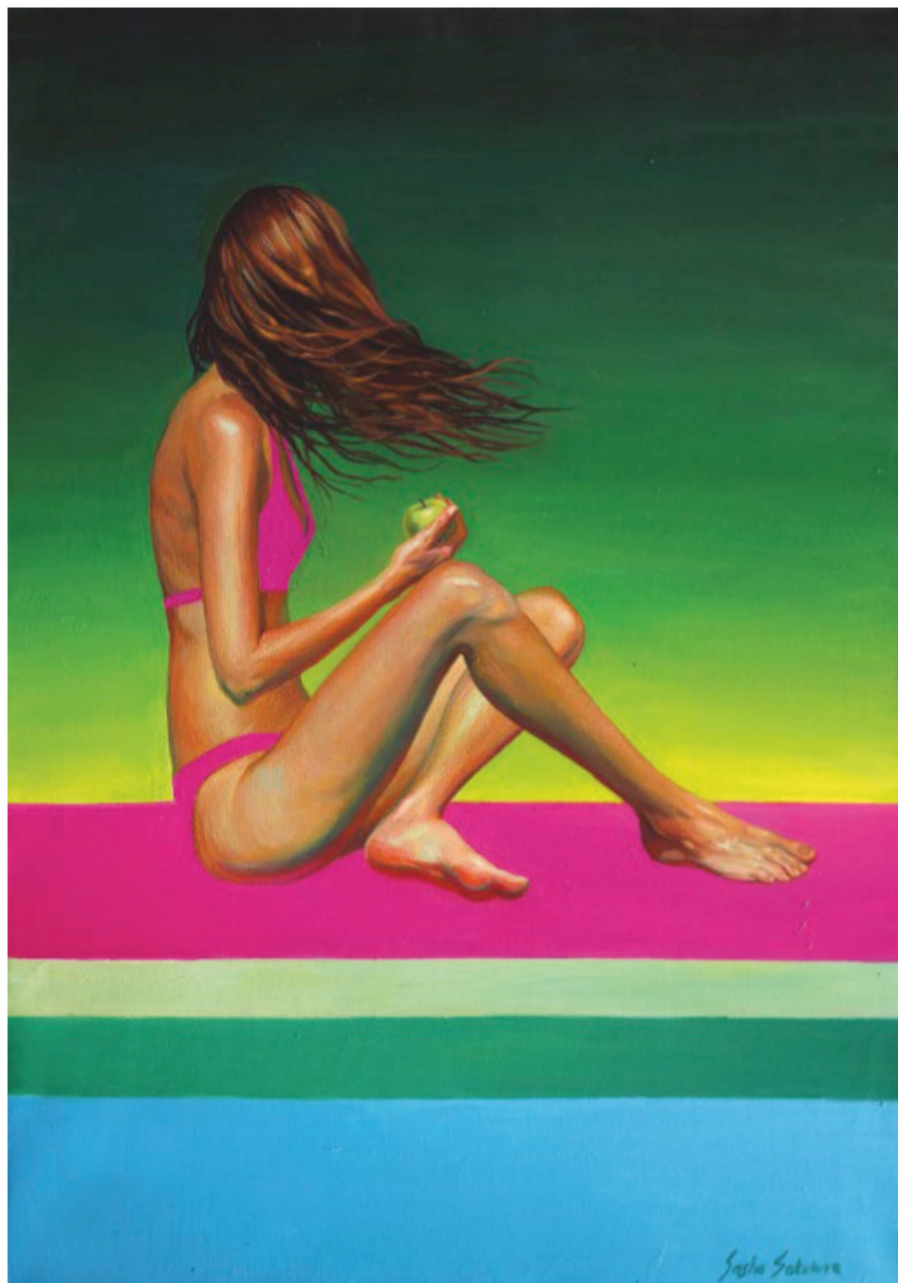
paintings, and for one painting, I might use dozens of photos together with my feelings. I usually don't process the images, I just choose the ones I like straight out of the camera and then flip between different images as I work, taking highlights from different ones.

Unlike many artists, I rarely do preparatory sketches in pencil or charcoal; I am more comfortable with the brush than a pencil and the way it moves on the canvas. My first strokes are about proportion and composition. I made hundreds of photos with different exposures, not only to catch the moment but different details, shades and colours, and the final work is always a collage of many references,

my own memories of the scene and the abstract colours I change to emphasise my feelings. I already imagine the composition on the canvas and start painting in oil straight away. I like working directly on the canvas and finding the composition there, and if needed, changing it as I go. It never works for me on the smaller sketches; they don't give you the sense of the scale, and I don't like to repeat things. You lose the spontaneity. Usually the result is unknown when I start. It's always a surprise because even during the process I am thinking what I can add to the composition in the moment, and I let the painting "lead" me.

I was trained in oil and in

watercolour and continue to paint in both media with the best materials I can find, like the Rembrandt range. Recently I have been trying water mixable oil paints, as I am often painting indoors and don't like to use toxic solvents. Also these paints are easier to travel with and paint in plein air. At first I didn't like them as they do handle differently and I was trying to do everything with just the pigments and water. It has taken me time to find a technique I am happy with—using a water mixable thinner and stand oil, not just water, to adjust the handling and drying times to better suit the way I work, and this is the first time I've done a whole series with these paints.



Pool 4, oil on canvas, 100 x 70 cm (39 x 28")


The pool, yoga mat and background grass are reduced and abstracted to rich parallel bands, with a gradient on the grass to add a sense of mysterious depth. The hair, by contrast, is very textured and twisting in the wind.

I think I will always paint in oil because of its versatility and it is both the most challenging and most rewarding medium for me.

I basically use classical techniques I learnt in school and from my grandfather, who was a strict teacher. But the subject matter in this series is not something he would choose...at all! My philosophy in general is to create modern images using the heritage of traditional techniques, combining realism and simple, almost abstract forms. I concentrate to get the skin

tones of my subject correct and try to capture their spirit and personality. Secondly, and particularly in this series, I adjust colours to be in harmony with the figure or composition, either to set a mood or make a contrast. I want the figures to "pop," to stand out and really catch the viewer's attention, and I try to create a focal point using the composition and colours.

My pool series is about those sunny summer days in my dacha (country house) in a small village outside of Moscow, capturing the energy and feelings of carefree happy times of my childhood. When we built this modest pool in our yard, it really became the main attraction to all our neighbourhood friends (and cat). Everyone was dragged to it, gathering around the pool. I wanted to paint a series about this pool, and the energy of that season and moments. It's proven to be very popular.

In Russia, it's grey and dark for a lot of the year and so summer is a really special time and you make the most of it. I wanted to preserve that and add colour to people's lives year-round. I chose blocks of vibrant colours with energy as well as kind of transparent/translucent bikinis, like the energy is going through you. I wanted to create a feeling that the girls are so into the joy they are experiencing, that they merge with the environment. Colour is a very strong tool as you can affect moods, so I tried to influence by colour without adding many details to the background. I am trying to say more without saying a lot by using simple effects like gradient and straight lines, and sometimes a simplified water texture. I am creating mood with colours—summer, joy and fun. 

My Art in the Making Pool 6

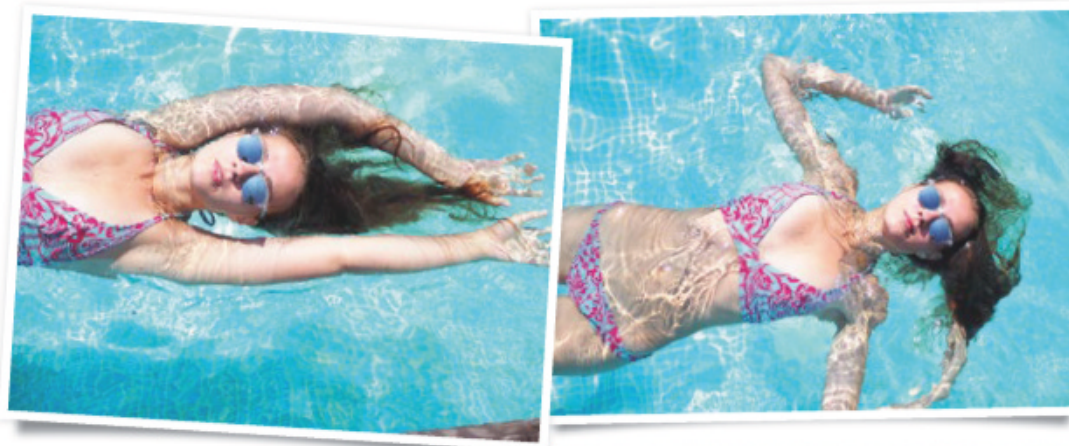


Photo
References

STAGE 1 UNDERPAINTING AND COMPOSITION

The outlines of the body are not precise in this first stage. I will be correcting the anatomy subtly during the whole process of painting slowly. I used a #22 Escoda Filbert (4729) hog bristle brush, which is pretty stiff. On this underpainting stage I placed the swimming girl the way I want—centrally and paint the white canvas with roughly the palette I am looking for. The colours are the base to work above so on this stage they might be a little duller than on the final painting.



WHAT THE ARTIST USED

Cobra Artist Water Mixable Oils

- » Burnt sienna
- » Cadmium orange
- » Cadmium red medium
- » Cadmium yellow medium
- » Carmine
- » Lamp black
- » Light oxide red
- » Permanent green deep
- » Permanent lemon yellow
- » Raw sienna
- » Titanium white
- » Turquoise blue
- » Ultramarine
- » Yellow ochre

Canvas

- » Acrylic-primed Belgian linen
100% linen stretched on wooden
stretcher, medium grain

Brushes

- » Raphael Kevrin+ natural
mongoose brushes number 6
and 2
- » Escoda Clásico hog bristle
brushes, filbert, number 22, 16,
14, 12, 8, 6
- » Sponge

Other materials

- » Winsor and Newton Artisan
stand oil
- » Winsor and Newton Artisan
thinner

- » Talens Cobra Glazing water
mixable medium
- » Retouch varnish (spray)
- » Gloss finishing varnish (spray)
- » Paper tissues
- » Palette knife
- » Palette
- » Water bucket





STAGE 2

CORRECTING THE OUTLINE AND COLOUR

Next, I am correcting the outlines of the body, and I start to work on the details of the face and glasses. I switched to a thinner, rounder Raphael mongoose brush. I improved the skin colour, put more light highlights on her face and body. I also start on her body parts that are under the water (belly, hands) darkening them to paint bright glowing reflections of light on the top later. I built up another layer to the background colour, so you can't see the canvas though the paint. With these water soluble oils, I can mix water into the medium so that the layer will dry overnight and it lets me work faster.

STAGE 3

PREPARING THE BASE FOR THE WATER GLOW

Now I paint the reflecting light under the water with bright yellow (mixing titanium white, permanent lemon yellow PY184, cadmium orange P020). Using an even smaller mongoose brush, the lines of light are standing out well from the prepared darker underpainting. I painted the main direction of these stripes so I don't get lost in them when I work on top of them in the next stage.

STAGE 4

DETAILS OF THE FACE AND ARM

Now I start to focus on just one section. For me it's easier to finish at least one fragment of the painting at a time. First of all I like go into the details and perfect them, and then work outward from this which is maybe unorthodox. Also it will give me a feeling that one part is complete and I can imagine the whole painting more easily. Here I chose to finish the face and the hand next, which is a warm up before the belly part because it is more difficult.

Continued ▶



STAGE 5 WATER EFFECTS

This part is the most complicated and challenging part of the painting. In this part I introduced a glazing technique. I had to put a few transparent layers one on another to make the light glow and also to be smoother, not too sharp.

STAGE 6 FINISHING THE BACKGROUND

On this stage I could relax after hard work of the belly details and painted the final water layer an even and beautiful bright green (colour titanium white, turquoise blue PW7/PB15/PG7, permanent green deep PG7/PY154). Instead of the brush I used a damp sponge, which helped me to do it faster and smoother as I didn't want to have the brushstrokes on the background.



STAGE 7 FINAL TOUCHES

It's time to finish the arms and I'm continuing to add touches from my memory. I add some dots of white splashes. Even at this stage I am still improving the position of the arms for the distortion of the water, and I reworked some of the stripes.



STAGE 8

COMPLETED PAINTING *Pool 6*, oil on canvas, 84 x 140 cm (33 x 55")

I'm happy with the result and I think I've achieved the sense of depth with the effect of the girl arching out of the water. Quite unlike the photo, I've made the surrounding water a block of energised colour to heighten this effect and catch the mood, and to be a striking piece on the wall.



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Sasha Sokolova was born in Moscow into a family of artists. She trained in oil painting since childhood with her grandfather Yuri Oparin, a former State Artist of the USSR. At the age of 9 she was accepted into the Sergey Andriyaka School of Watercolour and Fine Arts and has won scholarships from the V. Spivakov fund and Young Talents Fund. In 2015 she completed a Masters of Fine Arts at the Gerasimov Institute of Cinematography.

In 2016, she was selected as one of the artists to create the award-winning, first fully painted feature film, *Loving Vincent*, on the life of Van Gogh. Following solo exhibitions in 2017 in Gdańsk and Berlin and 2018 in Moscow,

her current works are for a forthcoming show in Moscow this year. As Ambassador for the Talens Group, she will be collaborating with the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam in The Year of Rembrandt 2019, and will exhibit there in 2020.

Her works are in private collections around the world, including Australia, Canada, United States, Great Britain, Spain, Germany, France, Finland, Belgium, Poland and Russia.

Contact at

contact.sashasokolova@gmail.com
www.sashasokolova.com



@sashasokolovaartist



Richard Robinson

See More, Paint Less

Richard Robinson shares painting lessons from the great outdoors, such as finding the visual concept



The problem we usually face as painters is that we just love to simplify things, to make symbols of things, we love putting things in little mental boxes and labelling them so we don't have to expend so much energy figuring them out every time we see them. We do this with everything we encounter, even people. If we didn't do that we'd be overloaded with new information all the time and it would be exhausting. When we are learning new things our brains are busy trying to slot the information into boxes we already have available—relating new information to old information.

If you see a new type of tree on your travels to a tropical island, there is already a box waiting labeled “trees.” It may be the most amazingly convoluted banyan tree you've seen in your life with monkeys swinging through it and a thousand birds of paradise nestled among the towering branches. Its leaves can be sparkling with all the colours of the rainbow after a tropical downpour, and the trunk and hanging roots are almost set alight by the blazing sunset, but it still goes in the “tree” box—you hardly need to look at it.

We have our brains doing that the whole time on autopilot, but as artists it's our job to see what others don't. We should see



Golden evening light was the visual concept this painting was built around.

outside the boxes, past the symbols and to see the differences, the variations in nature, the complexity and the achingly beautiful subtlety of it all, to process as much of that as we can and translate it to paint on canvas.

Picasso said that as adult artists we spend our time trying to paint like children again. I suppose he meant to

paint with the joyless abandon of youth, but in order to see past our symbols we also need to see like a child again with fresh eyes as if it were the first time we saw a tree or a field of wheat. How can we do that? It's a real challenge.

Our second big challenge, especially with landscape painting, is that we just can't paint all the complexity we're given.

So we've got two opposing problems. It's a balancing act. On the one hand we need to see more than we usually do, to avoid seeing things as symbols, and on the other hand we need to paint less than what we see. How can we do that? In the following few articles we're going to look at some ways to help retrain our brains so we can see more and paint less.



I focused on the spotlight foreground as my visual concept for this painting.



My main visual concept in this painting of a boat was fluid brushwork.

Having a Plan

When you paint outside you need to simplify things for yourself as much as possible and have a solid process to follow, otherwise you will be overwhelmed by all the complexity out there. We go to do battle with the elements and bring back gold! Your process is your shield that stops you being overwhelmed and your imagination is your sword to carve out your vision.

When I paint outdoors here is the process I follow:

Find a scene that moves me.

Find the visual concept for that scene.

Draw or imagine the notan design.

Paint or imagine a limited value study.

Paint or imagine the colour study.

Paint the final painting.

What's the big idea?

What's the dark/light design?

Where will I place the main values?

Where will I place the main colours?

Dark to light, big to small, thin to thick.

I'll explain the rest in future articles, but to begin with let's look at the "visual concept."



This piece's visual concept was focused on both the dynamic patterns and the dark header.



In this painting, you see the visual concept of organic complexity at work.



This work has a dark one-third foreground.

Visual Concept

Every good painting begins with a strong visual concept. This is something that beginners usually miss completely because they are so concerned with trying to capture the likeness of their subject.

Here is a brief list of some visual concepts:

- Interesting Shapes
- Strong Colour
- Contrasting Textures
- Quiet & Simple
- Intricate Complexity
- Atmosphere
- Mood
- Evening Light
- Weather Effects
- Light Effects
- Strong Horizontal vs. Verticals
- Light Shape Amongst Dark
- Dark Shape Amongst Light
- Lyrical Movement

Note that they are concepts, not things. For example, it's not a "beautiful tree" or "big clouds." A good painter begins with a strong visual concept to base a painting on. The visual concept is usually suggested by the subject itself, especially in plein air painting, but you can just as easily apply your own visual concept to the subject or even begin with a visual concept in mind and find a subject to suit your idea.

More often than not, the visual concept will be the very thing that you love most about the scene, the thing that compels you to paint it, like the dramatic lighting or the strong colour or interesting shapes. The important thing is to clearly understand this motivation at the very beginning and write it down so you keep it in mind through the entire painting process.


Throughout this article, you'll see a few examples of some of my own paintings that began with a strong visual concept.



SCENE 1

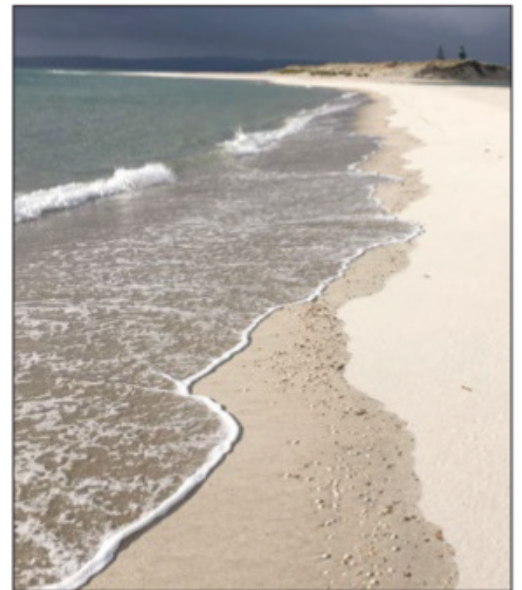
Try it Yourself

Now, write in a few brief words what it is about the three scenes on this page that first stir your emotions. This could be the visual concept for your painting. Choose from the previous list or come up with your own.

Before you begin your next painting, pause to consider what visual concept you wish to convey. When you do that and keep it in mind through the whole painting, making everything in it serve that purpose, your art will take a giant leap forward. 



SCENE 2



SCENE 3

ABOUT THE ARTIST



Richard Robinson is one of New Zealand's premier outdoor painters. Every year he teaches workshops around the world. You can view his extensive online lessons at www.mypaintingclub.com. In this article, we glimpsed inside one of his workshops to learn more about painting in the great outdoors. Get the entire ebook for FREE at www.mypaintingclub.com/paintersguidebook!





Ellen Fuller

Painting in Shades of Gray

Ellen Fuller explains how to establish values using the grisaille technique



Great Egret, acrylic on canvas, 36 x 48" (91 x 122 cm)

I saw this bird at Ding Darling Wildlife Refuge. Before I started to paint I thought about the composition. I studied the patterns in the wood along with the egret's movements and bone structure and then created a series of sketches. The stark contrast of the soft white feathers against the dark gnarled wood fascinated me.

Grisaille is a painting technique by which an image is executed entirely in shades of gray. It is often used to create the underpainting or first layer of a painting. It allows

you to establish the different values clearly. Value is the relative lightness or darkness of color. That's how we see and understand objects. It defines form and creates spatial illusion. Contrast of

value separates objects in space, while gradation of value suggests mass and contour of a continuous surface.

I decided to use only acrylic black and white paint because I felt color



Wood 2, acrylic on canvas, 24 x 30" (61 x 76 cm)
This painting is also based on photographs I took in Canyonlands National Park, Utah. Instead of using just black and white paint as in the demo, I opted to use color.

might weaken the dramatic effect of the wood's nuanced surfaces. By taking away color I was able to concentrate on the minute details, composition, and brush stroke, which gave me a complete understanding of the bark's fascinating textures. I restricted myself to five values. I chose ivory black, which is a brown-black of moderate tinting strength instead of Mars black. This gave me a greater variety of shades.

Once I am inspired by an image I consider if it will translate well into a painting. Excellence in realism is my goal. I take many photographs and then sequester myself in my studio, connecting to a space within my heart. The painting then reveals itself. A good drawing is about learning to see. When I draw an ordinary object, I realize how extraordinary it is.



Tree That Found Me, acrylic on canvas, 48 x 72" (122 x 183 cm)
I was intrigued by the desolate feeling of the dead piñon tree near my home. The story of this tree is in my video on my website.

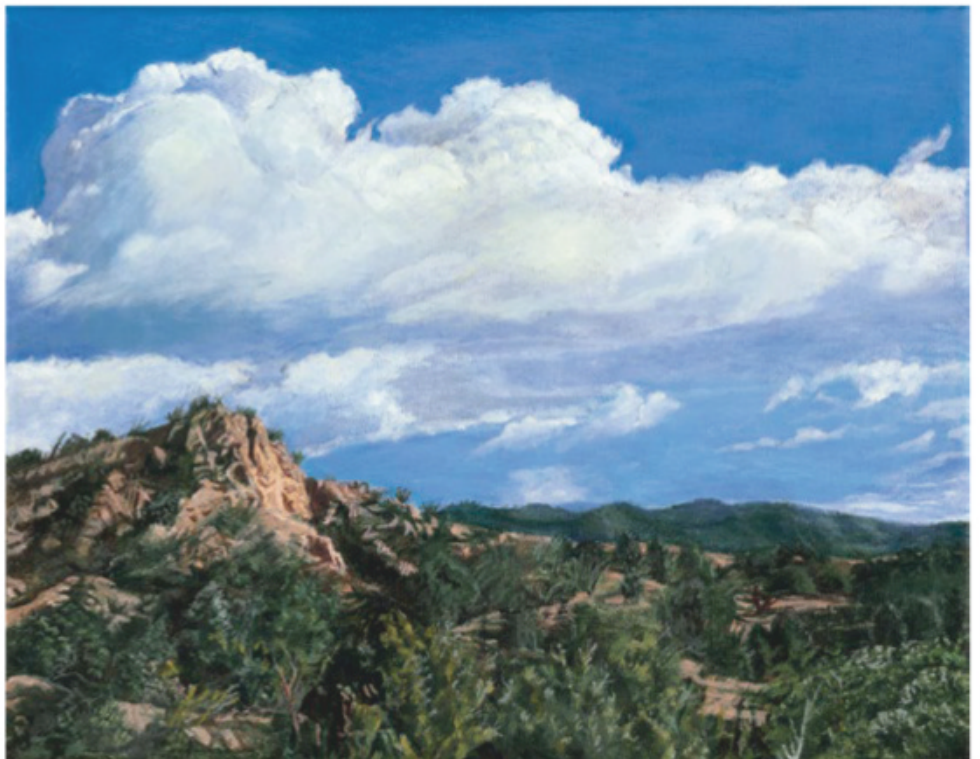


Tree at Tsankawi, acrylic on canvas, 30 x 40" (76 x 102 cm)

Whenever I would visit Tsankawi, which is one of my favorite places to hike in New Mexico, I would take a photo of this dead tree. I love the starkness of the tree contrasted against the blue sky and decided to paint this scene. My goal was to convey the same sense of wonder and beauty that I experienced while on location.

My Backyard, acrylic on canvas, 11 x 14" (28 x 36 cm)

I painted a place I know well, the high desert landscape that is seen from my backyard. Since New Mexico consistently has stunning skies I wanted to showcase one of those cloud-filled-sky days. My backdrop has the absence of mankind's influence on nature. I'm inspired by bare earth exposing layers of time, where wind and rain carve out mesas and arroyos and leave the land rough and parched. I belong here amongst the tranquility.





Misty Tree, acrylic on canvas, 18 x 24" (46 x 61 cm)

I first painted the whole canvas a purple grey and used soft edges on the trees in the background to create a steamy misty feeling.

It is important when composing a drawing or painting to look at both the positive and negative shapes and then to look back and forth between them to accurately assess proportions and relationships. Learning to draw negative shapes demands a new way of seeing. No matter what I am drawing or painting, I regard the positive and negative shapes within the composition as abstract shapes. I simply see them as a group of interlocking abstract shapes, like a jigsaw puzzle. Painting negative space helps me create thin lines by painting the negative shapes between them instead of the lines themselves. My paintings have to be accurately

rendered; therefore, I spend hours drawing numerous sketches. Coming up with a concept is a long, thought-out process. When I have created one that I am satisfied with I transfer it by drawing on my canvas using a grid.

Painting and drawing are such a great learning experience. Once I am able to capture a true likeness, I understand its true essence. My work is about visual intimacy and results from intense observation: a process of immersion that involves my contemplation and concentration, frustration and exhilaration. The painting process is both absorbing and soul satisfying. I infuse each brushstroke with my

experience of peace and soulfulness while words recede and the awareness of the passage of time fades away. To me, this is creative energy in its purest form—the ability to make something happen, to bring something into existence. My lifelong practices of t'ai chi/qigong and meditation translate into an energetic flow and personal expression in my paintings.

It's about discovery, of surrendering to the work, to its possibilities. I consider each part of the picture with the whole in mind, in order to present a more powerful and decisive composition. Details are only helpful when related to a larger vision.




Water Grasses, acrylic on canvas, 36 x 60" (91 x 152 cm)

To capture the reflections in the water was my primary goal. I also wanted to capture the stillness of the water.

I want to communicate my love of nature. In this fast-paced electronic world, my hope is that my paintings will encourage the viewer to pause, reflect and notice the beauty that surrounds us because there are visual treasures if we take the time to notice. Nature's beauty lies in its intricacies and minutiae. Since my inspiration comes from nature, things I want to paint constantly surround me. My paintings arise from the joy I feel when I'm experiencing this diversity.

Acrylic paint allows me to work on different sections at a time because it dries quickly. I work best when I am out of my comfort zone and have to struggle. In that way, I learn something new each time I paint. I am continually pushing the limits of my skill and creativity by making each painting progressively more detailed. My paintings may be mistaken for photographs. It's not about the end result but more about the process of learning. I feel gratitude for the creative

expression that has flowed through me. Expressing my creativity is living my passion. As an artist I understand the crucial role of surrendering to the work, to its possibilities.

My latest theme is trees. They are wisdom keepers, faithfully witnessing the unfolding of time. Examining the lives of trees offers critical insights for human wellbeing and survival, showing us when life thrives or falters. We must preserve the environment, and respect and protect wildlife. 

My Art in the Making Wood 1



REFERENCE PHOTO

While tourists were taking photos of Canyonlands National Park in southeast Utah I was on my knees taking photos of wooden barricades. I finally chose this photo for my reference.



STAGE 1 TRANSFERRING THE DRAWING

First I painted a base color of mid-gray mixed with gesso onto the canvas and then transferred my drawing freehand using a grid. I choose either a white or dark gray Prismacolor pencil. You can see my reference material on the right. I like to approach a painting one section at a time, moving onto another section when that one is complete. I've also included a detail of what I've painted so far.

WHAT THE ARTIST USED

Canvas

- » 36 by 48 inches

Gesso

- » White

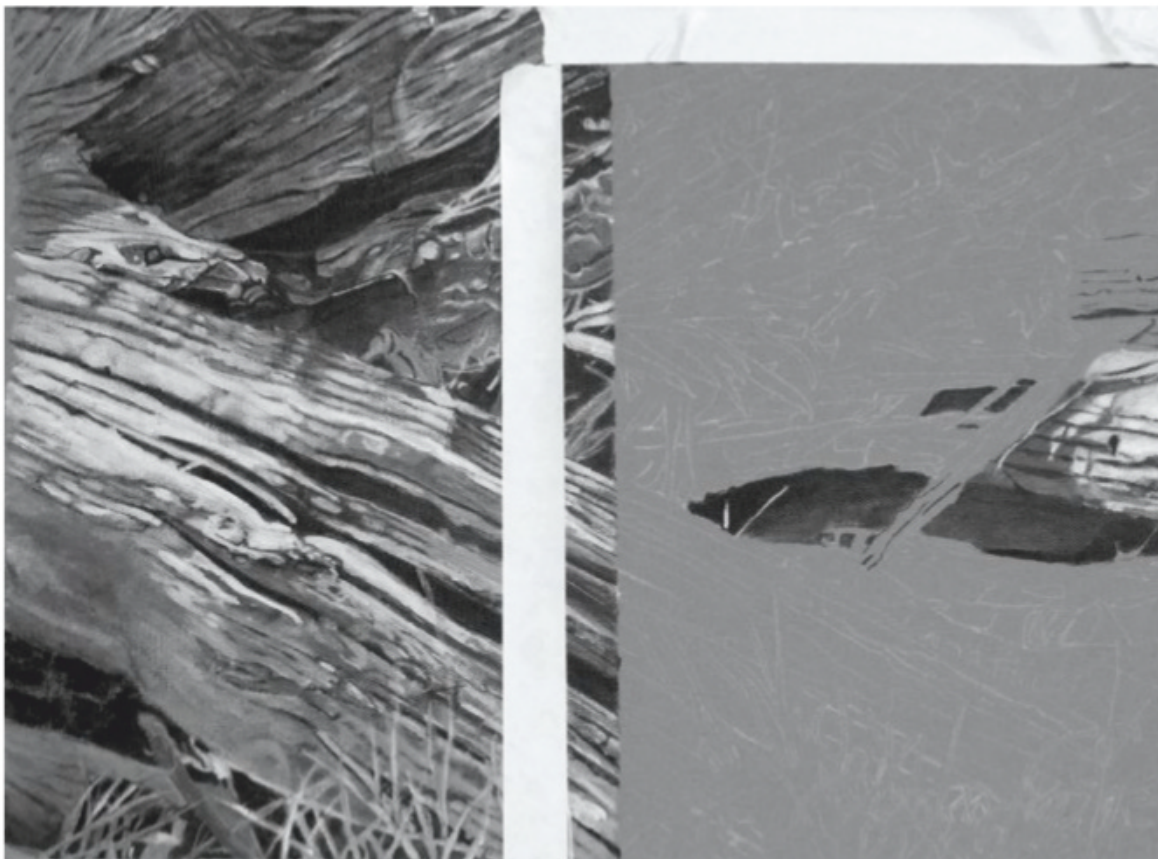
Acrylic Paint

- » Titanium white

Brushes

- » Silver Ruby Satin No. 6 and No. 0 Bright
- » Princeton Art & Brush Co. No. 6 and No. 4 Round

Continued



STAGE 2 REFINING AND ADDING MORE DETAIL

I started adding darks and lights. I decided to use only acrylic black and white paint because I felt color might weaken the dramatic effect of the wood's nuanced surfaces. By taking away color I was able to concentrate on the minute details, composition and brushstroke, which gave me a complete understanding of the bark's fascinating textures.



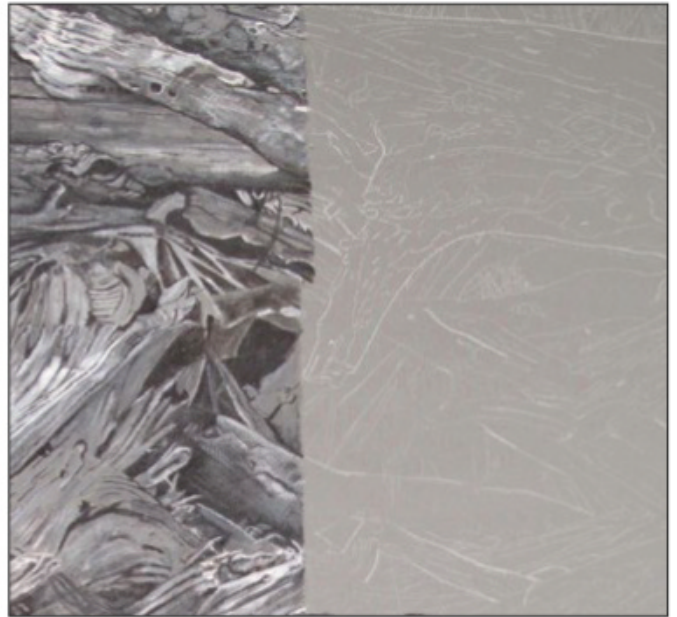
STAGE 3 PAINTING VALUES

Fewer values help create a cohesive, harmonious work. I painted values intuitively, as I went along, contrasting darks against lights to create visual interest while establishing the illusion of depth.



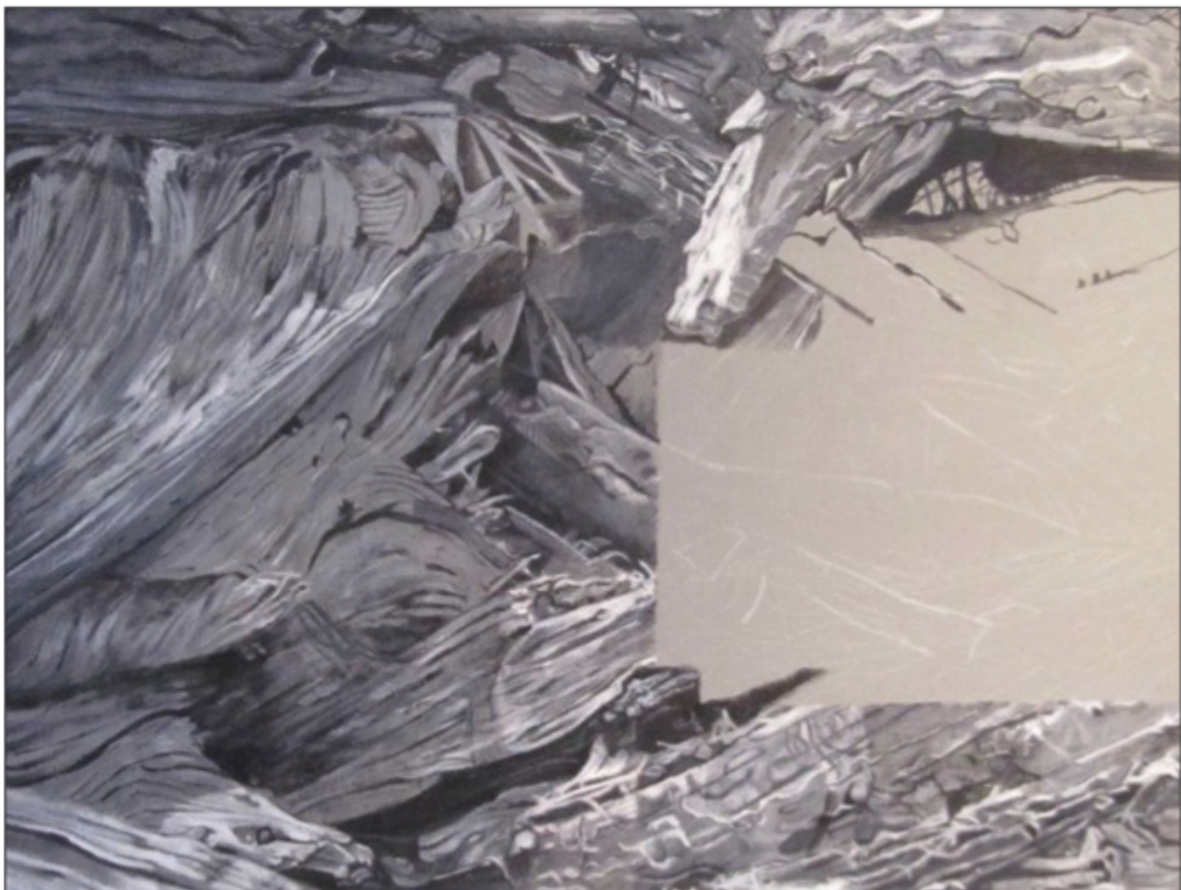
STAGE 4 CONTINUING THE DETAILS

I continued painting more details using value to create visual impact. By using greater tonal range the painting becomes more visually exciting. The lower the contrast in value, the softer the edges appear, even when painted sharply; the greater the contrast the harder the edges seem.



STAGE 5 REFINING

In these three pictures you can see how I'm adding more detail. I used five values to emphasize form and have been adding bright highlights as I go along to suggest more dimension.





STAGE 6 CREATING THE FOCAL POINT

I intentionally used a light value for the piece of wood to draw the viewer's attention to the piece of wood that looks like a bird, creating a focal point. Throughout my painting process I squint to see the values more clearly. I make use of light and shadow. The human eye is immediately drawn to a light element against a dark element so I consider the composition and how one's eye is lead through the painting to a focal point. In the detail you can see the train of the wood against the grass.





STAGE 7 FINISHED PAINTING *Wood 1*, acrylic, 36 x 48" (91 x 122 cm)

This painting took about eight months to complete. I went back to different areas and added more titanium white and more darks. I put the canvas away for about a week and then looked at it with fresh eyes to see if anything needs to be corrected. I strive for perfection.

ABOUT THE ARTIST



Born in 1945 in Brooklyn, New York, Ellen "Ellie" Fuller currently lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico. From a very young age, art has been a constant source of pleasure. She studied at Philadelphia

College of Art. Rather than pursuing a teaching career, she decided instead, to become a realist painter of nature.

Early on Fuller expanded her horizons to include etching, and during the early 1980s, she worked as an assistant to an English graphic designer. During this time, she became proficient in various techniques including murals, Trompe l'Oeil, faux finishes, marbling, graining, stenciling and sign painting. She also designed and executed large stained-glass panels for private homes and offices, restored church windows, and taught stained-glass classes. From 1987 to 1989, Ellie was an animator (hand drawn, not on computers) for many children's educational programs, including *Sesame Street* and *321 Contact*. One of her favorite projects during this period was painting backgrounds and doing "ink and paint" for *The Ring of Truth*, a six-part series on PBS.

Fuller pulls from her broad knowledge of different disciplines when working on her photo-realistic acrylic paintings that entail the finest detailed brushstroke. Months are needed to accomplish the finished representations that she paints today.

Her paintings are represented in private collections throughout the United States and Europe. She has shown her work at the Haggin Museum, Tucson Desert Art Museum and the Bennington Center for the Arts. Fuller's work has appeared in numerous publications including *International Artist*, and can be viewed in various art books. Fuller received the grand prize for her painting *Great Egret* in the American Women Artists' Online Juried Show.

Contact at
artist@ellenfuller.com
www.ellenfuller.com



Virginia Blackstock

Making an Impact

Virginia Blackstock focuses on powerful designs that show the effect of lights and shadows



Luscious Quintuplet, watercolor, 15 x 28" (38 x 71 cm))

My kitchen window was full of sunlight and just begging me to find a subject. It was harvest time in the orchard, so our apples were my first choice. I polished them up and again began painting many layers of all the primary colors. They were so much fun to look at and paint, brings back memories. The painting is in Ecuador.

The luminosity of transparent watercolor and the rich darks that are possible with their staining pigments are a constant fascination for me. I strive to keep my colors clean and fresh, to let them mix wet into wet on the paper in order to bring my closely focused still lifes and natural subjects alive. At the same time, I try to use striking value contrasts to move the viewer's eye around and through the painting; or to bring more focus to the center of interest.

My plan is to make a powerful design as it is affected by light and shadows. An unusual perspective of a usual scene or object gives impetus

to my purpose of action and lends power to the painting. Patterns, colors and textures all call upon my skills to invest life into the subject.

The negative area or background often becomes the crucial space in the composition, as do the shadows. Sometimes a spectacular shadow is my inspiration, as it was in my demonstration painting *Midnight Marvel*. At other times I'm challenged to capture the feeling of tranquility by depicting the strong light on petals or objects drenched in sunlight.

I find much joy in the appreciation of the viewer, when the viewer feels that kinship which I found in the hours of

creating it. It is my hope to bring forth in painting, the things I see in life that I hold precious. If my brush has enriched the thoughts and memories of others, it increases my sense of fulfillment.

I have gardened from childhood through most of my life. I am always fascinated by the beauty and intricacies of nature. I strive to grab the attention of the viewer to cause them to appreciate more of what surrounds them.

I have been excited to paint a particular hibiscus that has graced the center of our main street. It is always brilliant and happy, a real eye-catching experience. I have parked my car many times and returned through traffic to




Peace, watercolor, 22 x 30" (56 x 76 cm)

In the fall I went out to prune my large rose bushes (some stalks were 7 feet tall). They had bloomed their heart out. To my surprise, I had a beautiful last Peace rose. I could not resist painting such a survivor. I began, as I did in my demonstration, with many layers of yellows, pinks, reds and blue, building lights and shadows.

take pictures from all sides. They are the major player and stand out from the thick background mass of other flowers and foliage. For my painting *Midnight Marvel*, I chose to use three shapes: large hibiscus blooms, medium sized daisies and small petunias, rearranging them to enhance my circular design.

My three major concerns and focus are shape, value and color, in that order. My basic technique in *Midnight Marvel* is the use of glazes to achieve brilliance and attention. I use either pure or blended glazes in all my close-focused florals; sometimes to create luminosity, sometimes for richer, deeper color and sometimes to achieve distance or depth in the background.

These are all elements of a good design. Here I have used a circular design. I generally use a diagonal or cruciform design for more action. Whatever is used, it must work on my sketch paper before it is ever put on watercolor paper. If the design is not good, the painting will fail, so start over. 



Lilies and Mums, watercolor, 30 x 22" (76 x 56 cm)

I received a gorgeous bouquet of these flowers. I had previously painted several varieties of giant lilies growing at beaches and gardens. I wanted to paint these with my subject right in front of me before they wilted. I rearranged them to punch my design and center of interest. My background was mixed on the paper in staining colors wet into wet all at once.

My Art in the Making Midnight Marvel

When beginning a new painting, it is important to make decisions by asking myself a few questions. Why do I want to paint this? What do I want to emphasize? What is my center of interest? The first step is to make several thumbnail sketches of the scene to be painted. This allows me to eliminate and reposition anything to enhance the design. I then do a value study to be sure of how I plan to show off my center of interest, by leading the viewer's eye through my design with darks or lights.



Thumbnail Sketch and Value Study



STAGE 1 PREPARATION AND GLAZES

After I did my sketches and value studies, I selected a full sheet of Winsor & Newton 140-pound cold pressed watercolor paper. I soaked it 10 or more minutes in my bathtub, held it to the drain and placed it carefully on my Gator Board, making sure that there were no bubbles. I let it relax flat for 20 to 30 minutes before stapling it about $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch from the edge. I let it dry flat overnight, and now it is ready to transfer the sketch. I mask the spots to be left white with a diluted frisket applied with a nutpick or toothpick. On this painting, it was only the stamen area.

I spent an hour choosing, testing and mixing colors I planned to use. I painted the whole sheet with a light glaze of azo yellow with my 2-inch wash brush. Then I started my center of interest by painting a second glaze of quinacridone red and a third using quinacridone rose. Petal by petal I wet each with clear water, then glaze, leaving some drybrush whites showing in the direction the petal veins. The blooms on the left and the bud top right all received the same four glazes plus an extra quinacridone red and later a coat of the background glaze blended according to shape and shadow. Some leaves have glazes of sap green then apatite green genuine; lighter ones have azo yellow then sap green.

WHAT THE ARTIST USED

Watercolors

- » Alizarin crimson
- » Apatite green genuine
- » Azo yellow
- » Burnt sienna
- » Cadmium red
- » Cobalt blue
- » New gamboge
- » Phthalo blue

- » Phthalo green
- » Phthalo turquoise
- » Prussian blue
- » Quinacridone red
- » Quinacridone rose
- » Raw sienna
- » Sage green
- » Sap Green
- » Ultramarine blue

Materials

- » Winsor & Newton 140-pound Cold Pressed Watercolor paper
- » Gator Board
- » Liquid Frisket and nutpick
- » Staples and Tape
- » Spray bottle

Brushes

- » 16" round
- » 12" round
- » 2" round
- » $\frac{3}{4}$ " flat
- » 2" flat
- » 1" flat



STAGE 2 DEVELOPING THE BACKGROUND

I know I must find my darkest dark to know how many glazes will be needed. So I mixed two pans of paint. The first quinacridone rose, phthalo turquoise and Prussian blue, which I used at the bottom of the painting. The second dish was phthalo green, phthalo blue and alizarin crimson, to get even further back in the top background. I painted it in three sections to give me time to also blend and mingle sage green and ultramarine blue leaf suggestions in the distance. This was more to my liking, so I used it as the final glaze on the bottom and also under the flowers. Now with my darks in place I can continue glazing all the other forms to reach a balance and unity in my painting.



Continued



STAGE 3 FINISHING GLAZES

As the far right petal turns, the light causes an orange reflected glow, so I have used a thin orange glaze on it and the small petunias. More glazes are applied. For the daisies I used azo yellow and new gamboge, and in the centers were quinacridone red, phthalo green and burnt sienna. With the leaves I added quinacridone red into leaf veins. Another glaze of quinacridone red has been added to each petal of the center of interest. I worked positive and negative in the bottom left corner and repeated a small part into the top background.

STAGE 4 SHADOWS

The shadows of the hibiscus petals received at least two cobalt blue shadow glazes. The daisies had a final raw sienna shadow glaze. I removed the frisket and began to work on the stamen, testing azo yellow and a touch here and there of raw sienna. I very rarely use a cadmium color, but after several glazes of quinacridone red in the very center of the center of interest, I used a glaze of cadmium red to ensure its attention. I also used it on the small stamen dots



My Design & Composition Tactics

Inspiration

I look at my subject. If it is too inclusive, I use an old slide mount and extending my arm to decide on just what I want to include. Or I do the same with my camera focal adjustment. I take several photos to decide if any more is to be excluded, or if there is something extra to include. I am always conscious of where my center of interest will be. Then I begin a sketch and value studies.

Position

I paint standing at a 31-by-42-inch tilted drafting table to have freedom of movement to give rhythm to my strokes. For my demonstration painting I sat only to do the stamen detail.

Composition

I work and think hard to find the best composition. This means using the Golden Mean to be sure my center of interest is in one of the four sweet spots. I check to see that my darks (or lights) follow my viewer through the design. Do I have large, medium and small shapes? Do they overlap? Are they in the right place for my intended design? The more I think through the sketch, the value study, test my paint combinations and decide techniques to use, the more chance there is for accomplishing a good composition.

Critique

I analyze my work in many different ways during the painting process:

- Standing back from the painting and squinting
- Viewing it in my large mirror
- Turning it upside down
- Viewing it through my diminishing glass
- Placing a mat over the unfinished work at several stages
- View it in my hallway a day or two to check any further need before signing it
- My critique group may also get a shot at it

Glazing

Glazing allows luminosity. Thin washes allow under layers of colors to show through. They also allow you to slowly test your values and change them. If one glaze does not work for you, it can be removed easily before it dries. Many layers of glazes can produce deeply saturated, rich colors. At other times a glaze may be all you need to add another color as reflected light; to add color to a cast shadow; or to introduce translucent light (as coming through a flower petal).



STAGE 5 THE COMPLETED PAINTING

Midnight Marvel, watercolor, 22 x 30" (56 x 76 cm)

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Influenced by her many years of dance and theatre, Virginia Blackstock combines a flowing rhythmic movement with eloquent design and bold use of color, ranging from the dynamic to the subtle. She studied for years academically in the arts; and in the pursuit of excellence continues to study with leading watercolorists.

Blackstock earned signature membership in 13 State Watercolor Societies and has been published in five watercolor books and four art magazines. She painted a 17-by-40-foot mural on the side of a Main Street building honoring the cattle industry of Delta County.

Blackstock will be presenting her 64th solo show at the Grand Mesa Arts Center, May 17 through July 6. She has received many awards for

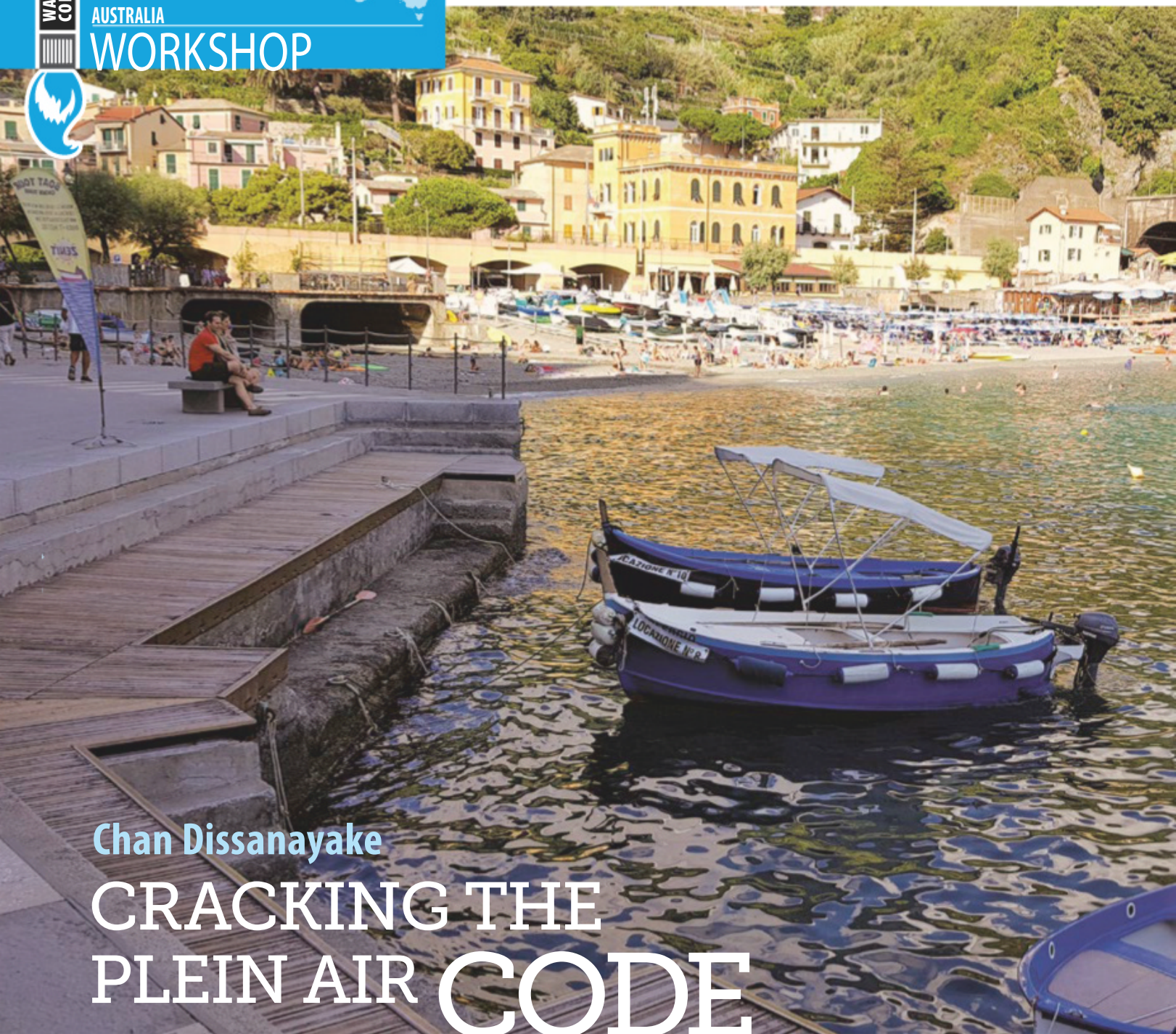
her paintings and has been listed in Who's Who in American Art yearly since 2001. In 2018, Marquis Who's Who honored her with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

Blackstock is one of the founders of Western Colorado Watercolor Society and a master painter. She will again hang a painting in their annual exhibition at the Grand Junction Art Center in March. She combines highly polished techniques with an inner visual representation of the beauty that surrounds her.

"Art and dance are the music of my soul; they help me celebrate my love of life," she says. "In capturing some small part of God's creation, I hope to touch the senses of the viewer."



Contact at
viriniablackstock7@gmail.com



Chan Dissanayake

CRACKING THE PLEIN AIR CODE

Chan Dissanayake discusses how to tackle and succeed at painting “on location” with these informative “hands on” demonstrations

In September of last year, I lead a painting tour to Tuscany Italy, organized by Travelrite International and *International Artist*. With 20 keen students and a local tour manager we visited some of the most stunning places in Italy. I would like to share this article on some of my experiences on this amazing painting tour.

The first half of the tour was spent on Cinque Terre or “five lands,” which is a remarkable stretch of land along the Ligurian coast consisting of five fishing villages spanning just over six miles. Thanks to a combination of spectacular views, great weather and an abundance of painting subjects, the hardest job was picking the best view to paint!

Cinque Terre

Monterosso, is the biggest and the oldest of the Cinque Terre's villages. It is divided into two parts, the old and the new. We were based on the new part of the town, but a 5-minute walk along the coast would get you to the old town. The following are the demonstrations done of the old town.

My Art in the Making Hillside View

Monterosso Al Mare – Old Town

It's hard not to be inspired by these majestic views and I decided to incorporate the hillside view of the old town as a demonstration. With cliffs at our back providing much needed shade, the old town was bathed with sunshine offering us a perfect subject. I decided to simplify much of the buildings to clarify the beach area which was going to be our focus for this painting. As usual, the painting was done in two washes, the first wash covering the lightest tones and the second wash taking care of the middle to dark tones. Before I started the second wash I wet the background with water to create the soft edges on the mountain tops. The clarity of this painting is achieved with washes and clean, confident brushstrokes, especially in the focal area.



Completed painting, with hillside of Monterosso Al Mare used for reference in background.



Monterosso Al Mare Hillside Demo

My Art in the Making Boats on the Beach

Monterosso Al Mare – Old Town

My second demonstration of the old town of Monterosso was from the beach looking into the headlands. Again simplifying the shapes was necessary, but I included the main elements to capture the feel of the place. A little inlet river passing through the beach's sand area offered a tonal contrast against the light sand and an opportunity to add some reflections of the boats. This place is a paradise for artists as subjects are in abundance; you could literally turn at any angle to find a great subject.



Monterosso Old Town students painting



Monterosso Old Town Demo



Reference photo

My Art in the Making Sailing Club

Monterosso Al Mare – New Town

We were privileged to have been given access to a private sailing club, which was situated in heart of Monterosso. It offered us some unique views of the town away from the crowds with up-close views of the sailing dock. After experiencing some early morning rain, this proved to be an excellent location as it also provided us with some shelter.

What really drew me to this subject was the contrast between the rugged mountains in the background to the calm, still water on the foreground. I made sure the colours used in the background were repeated in the foreground boats and reflections. Little touches of pure red were added to the tops of boats to draw attention to that area.



Me with my completed painting



Sailing Club

My Art in the Making Demonstration in Vernaza



Vernazza

A short train ride north from Monterosso, where our group was based, is Vernazza, perhaps the most beautiful of all the Cinque Terre's villages. It provided us with a perfect painting subject, where colourful houses surround its small marina. Arriving there early proved to be worthwhile as it allowed us to pick the best location before the arrival of the mass tourists.

Reference Photo



WHAT THE ARTIST USED

Paper

- » Saunders Waterford 300gsm
Rough Texture

Size

- » Half sheet (34 x 54)

Colours Used

- » Cerulean Blue, Ultramarine Blue, Raw Sienna, Burnt Sienna, Alizarin Crimson, Turquoise Blue

STAGE 1 INITIAL DRAWING

After having discussed various design decisions with the students, such as the simplifying and connecting of shapes, I started the initial drawing with the pencil. As this involved various man-made objects, such as buildings and boats, a relatively accurate drawing was necessary. I incorporated a few of the buildings on the left, providing the paintings with varied verticals as most of the other elements were horizontally dominated. The water and the beautiful fishing boats were my main subject. I made sure the boats are connected and varied in shape and size.



STAGE 2 FIRST WASH

The first wash is basically an under-wash, which establishes the lightest of the colours in the subject. Apart from leaving a few lights of the white of the paper, the whole painting was covered with this local colour wash. This helps to unify the painting. I started the sky area with ultramarine blue for the sky and as I approached the buildings I warmed the colours by changing the wash to a light raw sienna and a little burnt sienna. Adding a cooler cerulean blue for the distant water and changing to turquoise blue toward the bottom, I again left a few highlights on the top of the boats to create an impression of small ripples of waves. This creates an illusion of depth on the water. On the bottom left of the painting I added a bit of warmth and left a few highlights for the rocks. I allowed this to completely dry, which allowed all my students to catch up and allowed me time to provide guidance!



STAGE 3 FINAL STAGE

The final stage of the painting is where the mid- and dark tones are applied. Some of the previous wash like the sky and water would remain untouched. I started on the top left buildings and worked down. As these are darker tones they can be applied on top of the previous wash. For the buildings I used raw sienna with burnt sienna, which incidentally used to come from Sienna, which was an hour's drive from Vernazza, with a bit of alizarin crimson. Again I made good use of the previous wash by leaving it untouched for the roofs and windows. These colourful buildings are so unique to this region, so I decided to incorporate part of these building to capture the place. When it was time to paint the boats, I was careful to use the same colours that were used in the buildings. A lighter boat was framed with a darker boat from behind and I made sure all of them were connected. I made sure the reflections were darker in tone in comparison to the hulls of the boats. Overall I was pleased with the result and hoped I captured the mood of sunlit Vernazza. It was then time for my students to finish their work!

Demonstration Courtyard in Levanto

Levanto

A short train ride south of Monterosso is the little seaside town of Levanto. Although not part of the five villages of Cinque Terre, Levanto is a quiet little town with amazing architecture and seaside views. The town still has a medieval feel due to the presence of its old architecture. As we had been painting marine subjects up until then, I decided to tackle a slightly different subject with the group. We walked into a beautiful courtyard (Piazz) surrounding its iconic buildings. There were even empty seats available for us in the shade!

Reference
Photo



STAGE 1 INITIAL DRAWING AND FIRST WASH

It was important to spend a bit of time drawing, getting the proportions and perspective correct. I strategically placed a few figures in places to create interest. When adding people, the relative proportions becomes critical, as they must be carefully placed next to doorways and must be visually able to "walk into" them. The people also provide a scale to these beautiful buildings.

The initial wash was started at the top with some cerulean blue, which is a cooler blue, to create an impression of distance and depth. I changed the colours to raw and burnt sienna when the wash approached the buildings. In the central building I strengthened the colours by reducing the water consistency as it is our main focus and to make it stand out from the rest of the surrounding buildings. Of course I took care to leave the white of the paper untouched for highlights, which will become more evident in the next stage.

WHAT THE ARTIST USED

Paper

- » Saunders Waterford 300gsm
Rough Texture

Size

- » Half sheet (34 x 54 cm)

Colours Used

- » Cerulean Blue, Ultramarine Blue,
Raw Sienna, Burnt Sienna,
Alizarin Crimson



STAGE 2 FINAL STAGE

The final stage of the painting is where we pull things together adding the mid- and darker tones and attend to the necessary details. I decided to add a diagonal shadow across the main building from the right. This would also connect the foreground to the background area. I used lots of dry brush technique on the cobble stones on the foreground to create interest, but was careful not to overwork this area. Also the shadows would provide a lovely cool contrast to warm buildings.

Amalfi Coast and Puglia, Italy

Saturday, 7 Sept. – Thursday, 19 Sept., 2019

This workshop offers 13 days of painting and adventure on the Amalfi Coast and Puglia, Italy. You will paint the beautiful towns clinging to the cliff face along the Amalfi Coast as well as the whitewashed hill towns, centuries-old farmland and hundreds of kilometres of Mediterranean coastline of Puglia. We travel to Puglia, a southern region forming the heel of Italy's "boot", which remains relatively undiscovered. Its staggeringly rugged coastline stretches along the Adriatic Sea with deserted beaches, rocky coves and crystal clear water. White-washed towns dot the shores with colourful marinas and the bustle of fishing boat traffic. The landscape rolls up from the water in waves of green; centuries-old olive groves as far as the eye can see. We then travel to the Amalfi coast; it is an artist's dream where you will be able to paint the dramatic views of the towns along the Italian coast. This 13-day painting workshop with Chan Dissanyake gives workshop members the opportunity to truly experience 'la dolce vita', the sweet life.

*international
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John Lovett

Controlling Color

John Lovett shares his tips for finding the right color balance in every painting

There is often a temptation to be led blindly by the subject we are painting when it comes to decisions regarding color. A much more effective approach is to extract only what we need from the subject then carefully consider how best to tie these selected colors to the rest of the painting. Two useful tools to aid our color decisions are the

use of complementaries and balancing saturated color with compound colors.

Saturated Colors

Saturated colors contain either one or two primary colors and no black or white. They are the purest colors of each hue. For our purpose, we use a 12-part color wheel containing three

primaries (red, yellow and blue), three secondaries (orange, green and violet) and six tertiaries that sit between the primaries and secondaries.

Compound Colors

Compound colors are colors containing all three primaries. They are all the earth colors: browns, khakis, grays, etc.





◀ This color wheel is made from mixtures of Indian yellow, permanent alizarin crimson, French ultramarine blue and phthalo blue, which are the core watercolors I use.

The complementaries are colors directly opposite one another on the color wheel.

Indicated here are yellow/violet, red/ green and blue/orange. Allowing one color to dominate and contrasting this with a small amount of the complementary around the focal point gives a painting impact but maintains a balanced color arrangement.

▶ Taking things a step further, we can bring saturation into the equation. The outer ring of this color wheel is the same as the previous color wheel showing complementaries. It is made up of colors of the highest saturation possible from our core pigments.

The inner color wheel is of reduced saturation. This was made by mixing in a tiny amount of each color's complement. So, for example, the Indian yellow has a tiny amount of violet (French ultramarine blue and alizarin) added to reduce its saturation, and so on around the color wheel. These colors of reduced saturation are called compound colors and contain all three primaries.

Working with these colors of reduced saturation produces a more subdued result with greater color harmony. Adding areas of saturated color can really bring these more subdued arrangements to life.



Here we can see the range of compound colors available by progressively adding more of a color's complement. In this case, increasing amounts of yellow (quinacridone gold) was added to violet until 100 percent yellow was reached. Cross-mixing complementaries in this way can be done with any pair of complementaries around the color wheel. The result is an interesting range of compound colors.

▶ The bulk of this painting is made up of compound colors—dirty reds, oranges and yellows all subdued by their complements. Impact is given to the focal area by the use of a contrasting, saturated, complementary blue-green awning and some primary reds and blues in the figures. To create a diagonal movement through the painting I added more saturated color to the posters on the lower left and windows in the upper right.



To create the weathered patina of this old fishing trawler a palette of compound colors was used in combination with burnt sienna pigment ink (also a compound color). Drawing attention to the focal area of the cabin was achieved by tonal contrast (strong darks next to white paper), rather than saturated colors. The slight increase in color intensity in the cabin area is still a long way from saturated reds, blues or yellows. These slightly more saturated colors are enough to help hold attention while still maintaining the rusty, weathered nature of the fishing boat.

This painting is built upon a gradation of compound colors from pale, warm, subdued oranges in the background to cool gray/blues in the foreground. The color harmony is very tight in these areas and there is very little tonal contrast. By including strong darks and lights and saturated blues in the focal area, attention is drawn to the fishing boats. A little more saturated color around the buildings to the right help balance the composition.





The dry rolling hills of this landscape suit a palette of compound yellows, greens and grays. As the painting progressed so did the color intensity. The intensity of the yellow grass was increased toward the focal point and the trees were made slightly greener and darker in the focal point. The final step here was to splash on some pure permanent rose to intensify the focal area. The transparency of the permanent rose keeps it from becoming a saturated red and drawing too much attention.



There is no need to become too theoretical about the use of saturated and complementary colors. A simple approach to using compound or unsaturated colors is to mix all colors by adding whatever color you are mixing toward a puddle of neutral gray on your palette. Saturation can be increased as the painting evolves, giving much more control over the outcome. [Laf](#)

Unlike the fishing boat, this painting uses contrasting saturated colors for impact. The saturated blue/green background contrasts with the red-orange of the tiled roof. A variety of compound browns make up the textured detail of the building, while a few flecks of pure, saturated ultramarine blue gouache put life into the shadows of the focal point.



Deborah Friedman



Studying the Color Field

In Deborah Friedman's most recent drawings of cairns she studies the interaction of colors

Colored pencil returned me to my love of drawing. I transitioned back to the medium after seeing the strides made by other artists using a myriad of "CP" techniques in a magazine in 2005. It was easier to pick up pencils and get straight to work than to mix oils, work and clean up while raising young children. I particularly like the transparency of colored pencils, and often layer 20 or more colors to create the effects I'm looking for.

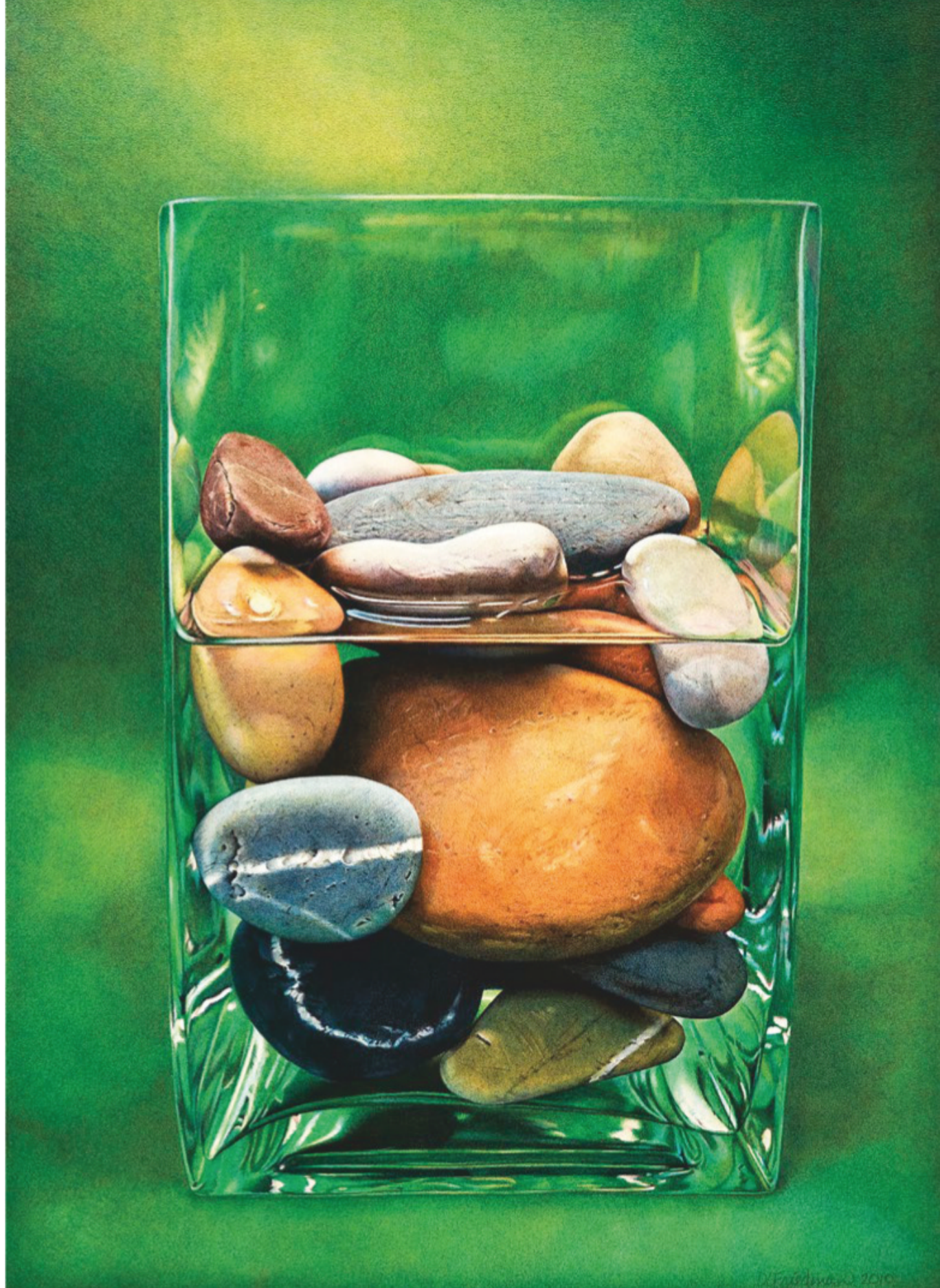
I've learned numerous techniques for applying and removing pigment, and love to push myself in developing my use of the medium, including using watercolor layers and solvents. The Colored Pencil Society of America has been instrumental in my successes with this medium, through attending their convention, meeting other CP artists and taking workshops. CP artists are very open to sharing their techniques and passion for colored pencils.

My art often involves juxtapositions of contrasting elements, and usually incorporates something from nature. My current series of work started as a challenge in the summer of 2009 to develop 10 small drawings exploring different ways of looking at stones. I made it to the eighth drawing, placing some stones in a bowl of water to look at the meniscus line when I discovered ideas I was excited to pursue. I'm captivated by color, light, distortion and mood, as well as finding unique ways of interpreting such a common object.

These drawings have always been about light and color, and at first were larger and covered the entire substrate, tackling an array of challenges depicting light and color distortion through glass and water. Using solvents to blend initial background layers helped speed up the often-tedious process of covering a large area (as does the Icarus Board, which uses

Primary Trio, colored pencil on Strathmore Bristol Board, 10 x 23" (25 x 58 cm)

One of my newer drawings exploring color relationships, each cairn contains colors within the same primary family. This piece is very inspired by reading Josef Albers' *Interaction of Color*.



Counterpoint in Green, colored pencil on Strathmore Bristol Board, 21 x 15" (53 x 38 cm)

I started to explore a new concept with stones in water in this piece—the meniscus line, and how it distorts light, color and shape. Unable to get the green I wanted for the background, I used a bottle of Simple Green for inspiration.

MY TECHNIQUES & DESIGN STRATEGIES

» **Work from all angles.** While my work is representational, I like to work on my pieces from every angle—upside down, sideways, right side up. It helps to clarify the shapes, colors and allows me to see areas more clearly.

» **Always layer colors to achieve more depth of color.** This is especially true for the darkest areas. I never use black, and instead prefer to use a minimum of dark brown, sepia or dark umber combined with dark grape and indigo blue. Lighter areas benefit from multiple layers as well. Colored pencils are transparent and the layers of color, when applied lightly, create stunning results.

» **I vary the direction of my pencil strokes to fill in the paper texture better.** Basically there are five levels of pressure for applying colored pencil, one being the lightest and five being so hard it starts to compress the paper. I tend to use a pressure of two, sometimes three. This allows the paper to accept more layers of color before it is saturated.

» **Work clean.** When working on white paper, it's important to use a barrel stave, support, or piece of glassine to keep one's hands from smudging the drawing, and adding oils and debris into the surface. I use kneaded erasers and drawing brushes to remove errant bits of colored pencil and dirt, and always wipe my newly sharpened pencils on a nearby towel to remove any remaining dust before drawing. My worktable is a mess, but my drawing isn't!

» **When in doubt.** Nearing the end of a drawing, if I'm unsure about whether or not it's done, I'll put it away in my storage drawers for a bit. Fresh eyes often reveal a new perspective on a piece.



Profiles in Courage, colored pencil on Canson Mi-Teintes, 15¾ x 14½" (40 x 37 cm)

Toned pastel paper sets off the color palette in this drawing of whimsical, facelike stones. Much of the paper is untouched. I have many stones with faces and mouths that I draw when I want to lighten up; this is one of my favorite drawings.

heat to blend the wax in the pencils). I also found several ways of removing the pigment, which creates interesting texture, line and can be used to re-work an area without muddying it.

I employ several removal techniques; the one I use most often is to take a small (about 1½- to 2-inch) piece of Scotch Brand Multi Task Tape in my left (non-drawing) hand, and hold it over an area, while drawing on top of it with a pencil. This allows the creation of little dots, lines, splotches, etc. It's important not to let the tape sit on the paper because it will remove more than you want, but it's a brilliant tip I learned in a workshop. I have several dirty bits of tape on my drafting table, and when a stone needs some overall texture, I'll use one of them and sort of run it lightly over the area, removing an irregular area that I'll go back in and add detail to. The dirty tape makes it


possible not to remove all the pigment.

Kneaded erasers are also great at removing color and creating texture, but with less precision than the tape. I often work on white or colored pastel paper and leave the background untouched, and kneaded erasers are mandatory for keeping the paper clean. There are also electric erasers, and their points can be shaped for specific, detailed removal and also used through stencils if desired.

Color lightfastness is one of my top priorities in a colored pencil, and I try exclusively to use the highest rated pencils. The CPSA publishes a color lightfastness book that is available, at no cost, to its members. I use many brands, including Koh-I-Noor Polycolors, which I like for the waxiness and yet ability to hold a sharp point making them great for detail. Also on my drawing table are: Prismacolors for their range of

color and soft, buttery quality; Faber-Castell Polychromos for some lovely colors that I have to have, and their texture; and the Caran D'Ache Luminance pencils for their unrivalled range of lightfast pinks and purples. They are the most expensive colored pencil, and worth it for these colors, as with other brands most pinks and purples have tested fugitive.

Experimentation with many different substrates; including Stonehenge papers, Rtistx boards, Ampersand Pastel boards, Canson Mi-Teintes pastel papers, and Strathmore Bristol Board, has led me to prefer the Strathmore and Canson papers. The Bristol Board vellum has a wonderful surface, and is thick and stable enough to hold up to many layers of both dry and wet application without warping. The pastel papers I find pleasing for more delicate drawings where I'd like the tone of the paper to add to the drawing.

More recently, I've become interested in color theory, particularly from reading Josef Albers' *Interaction of Color* and studying the color field paintings of Mark Rothko. I've started looking at how colors affect one another, bleed into and bounce off each other. The smaller drawings of cairns, such as the demo that follows, are ideal for these studies, and many end up being paired as diptychs or triptychs. I'm also planning to get back into oil painting and try some of these images on a larger scale. I love it when people tell me that they find my work peaceful and meditative, and often I'll hear "I don't know why I like looking at it so much, but I really do." They're just stones, but they've become a vehicle for my artistic exploration. 

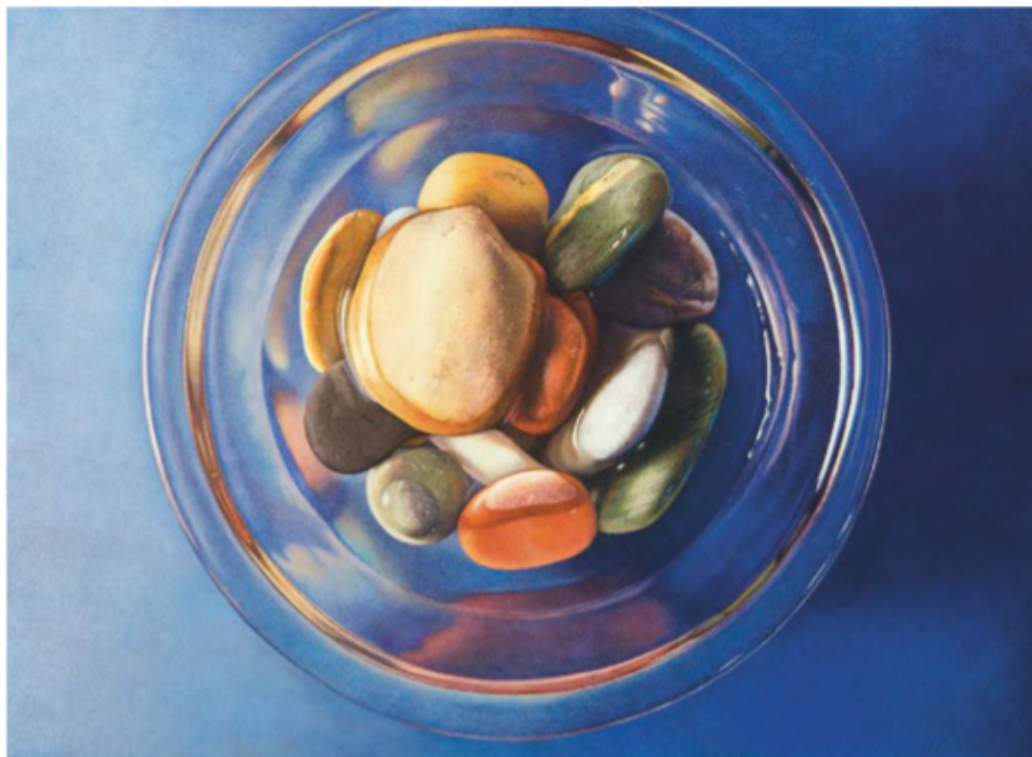
Lapis Light, colored pencil on Rtistx Board,
14 x 20" (35½ x 51 cm)

This piece continued my exploration of color, light, distortion and interpretation on a new surface. I love the journey my eye takes around the composition, and find it very peaceful and contemplative.



Heart Line, colored pencil on Strathmore Bristol Board, 15 x 13" (38 x 33 cm)

This drawing is one example of imagery I like to do combining and playing with the lines in stones. I have collected many heart shaped stones, but especially enjoyed creating my own heart.



My Art in the Making Tilted Carin

WHAT THE ARTIST USED

Materials and Tools

- » Strathmore Bristol Board
- » 500 Series Vellum 4 ply, sized to 10 by 10 inches
- » Foam Core for backing
- » Kneaded Erasers
- » Scotch Brand Multi Task Tape
- » Gamsol Solvent
- » Inexpensive small watercolor rounds for blending solvent
- » Inexpensive small bristle brushes for burnishing color pencil layers
- » Prismacolor Col-Erase Light Grey for initial layout
- » Drawing Brush
- » Glassine or a drawing support to keep hands off of the paper
- » Lascaux Spray Fixative

Colored Pencils

- » **Koh-I-Noor Polycolor:** Gold Ochre, Dark Brown, Brown, Cherry Red, Mountain Blue, Prussian Blue, Grey, Slate Grey
- » **Prismacolor Premier:** Cream, Gamboge, Sable, Yellow Ochre, Light Peach, Mineral Orange, Pumpkin Orange, Terra cotta, Powder Blue, Indigo Blue, Slate Grey, Burnt Umber, Light Umber, Kelp Green, Dark Green, Beige, Putty Beige, 10% Cool Grey, 30 % Cool Grey, 70% Cool Grey, Burnt Ochre, Black Grape, 10% Warm Grey, 50% Warm Grey, 50% French Grey
- » **Faber Castell Polychromos:** Medium Flesh, Venetian Red, Sanguine, Rose Carmine
- » **Caran D'Ache Luminance:** Violet Grey, Light Aubergine, Ultramarine Violet, Maganese Violet



Reference Photo

This photograph offers a good rhythm of color placement, strong shadows, and a fun balancing point to explore.



STAGE 1 INITIAL LINE DRAWING WITH SHADOWS ADDED

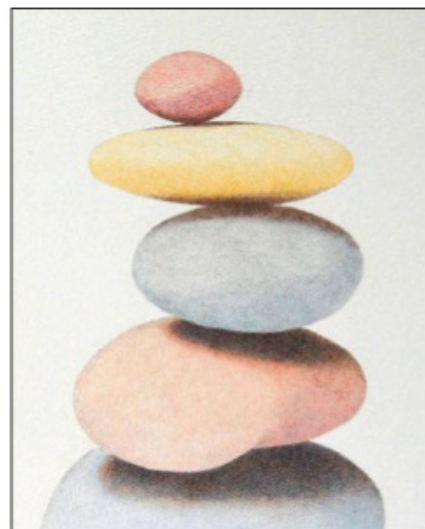
A simple line drawing is executed with Prismacolor Col-Erase grey, which erases easily and cleanly, if needed. The deepest shadows are laid out with dark brown, which allows me to better visualize further color application.



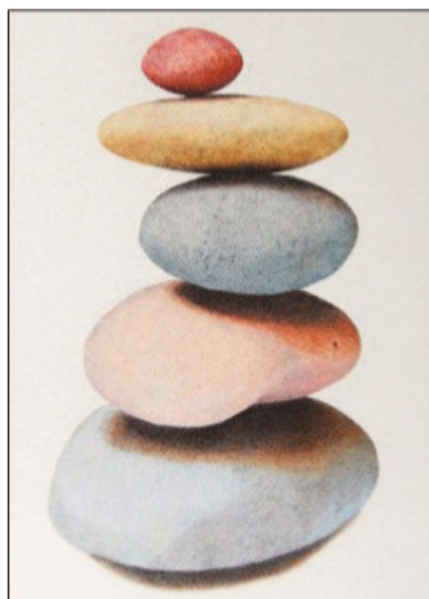
STAGE 2
FIRST LAYER OF LIGHT COLOR
Muted initial colors are laid down, sometimes two colors per stone. The middle stone has 30 percent cool grey and mountain blue combined. These layers will be blended with solvent and a brush, so I keep them light.



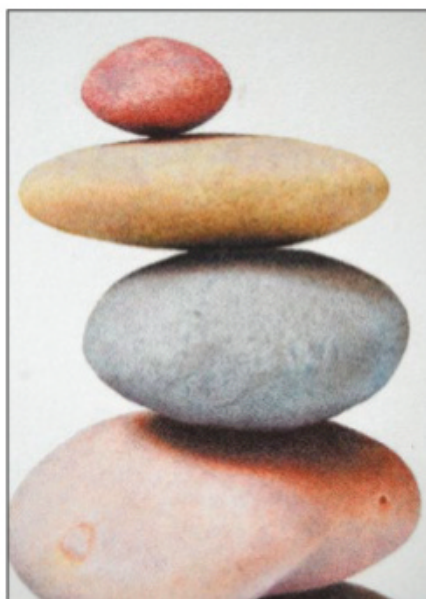
STAGE 3 **GAMSOL BLEND**
The top four stones have been blended with Gamsol; the bottom stone is untouched, making it easier to see the color intensity achieved by this type of application. The drawing needs to dry at this point.



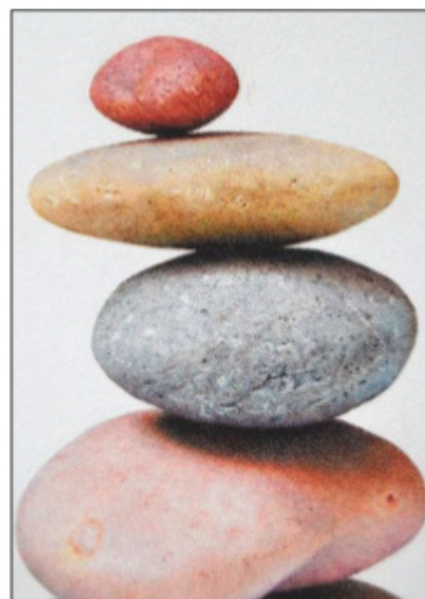
STAGE 4 **BLEND PLUS ADDITIONAL LAYERS**
Many new dry layers have been added; including indigo, dark brown and black grape to all of the shadows. I play with color choices now, for instance the yellow stone contains four shades of yellows, light umber, orange and peach.



STAGE 5 **FURTHER COLOR DEVELOPMENT**
Building up color layers, I use the same colors on every stone, such as pumpkin orange and burnt ochre bleeding out of the darkest shadows. Kelp and dark greens have been added to the darker part of the yellow stone, and edges are being refined with violets and light browns.

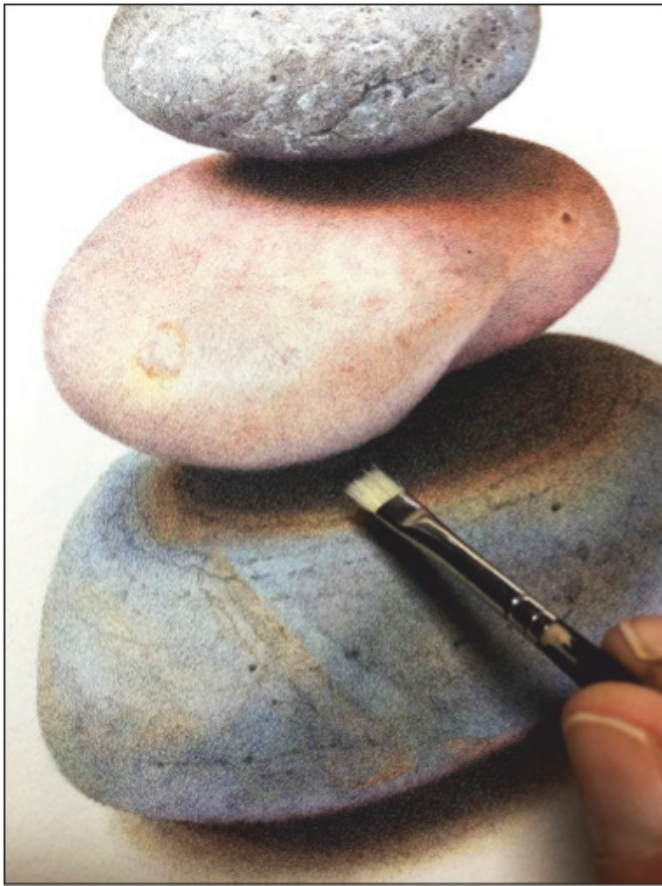


STAGE 6 **PRE-DETAIL DEVELOPMENT**
A close up shows further color layering and some detail emerging. Violet grey, manganese violet and light aubergine have been added to all of the stones. Some irregularities are emerging, which will be further exploited in the next stage.



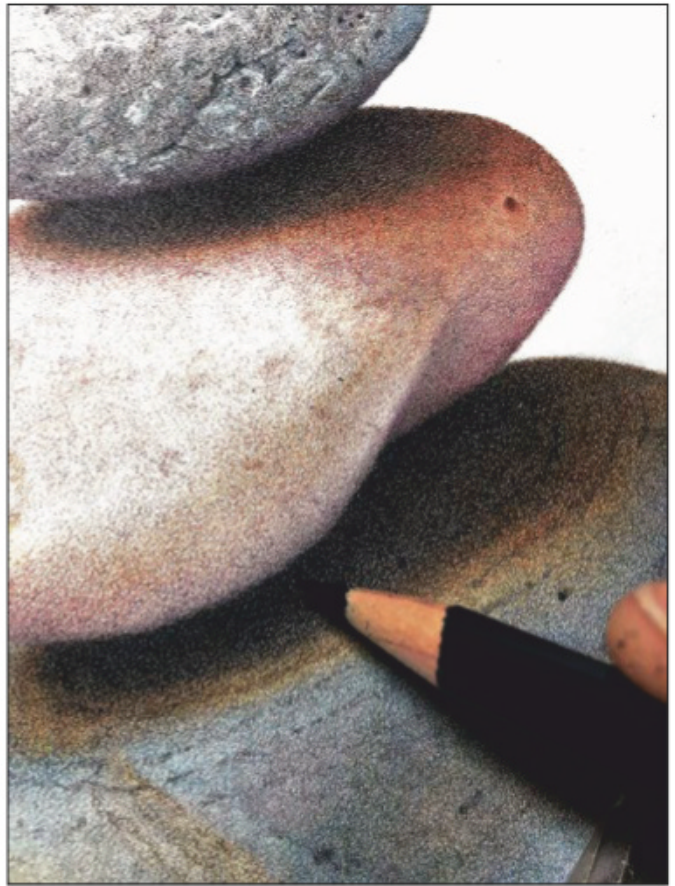
STAGE 7 **DETAIL OF STONE TOWER**
Using the tape and kneaded eraser and consulting my source photo, I remove dots and lines on the stones, and create blotchy areas with the dirty tape removal technique. Then I go back in and add holes, lines and different colors to some of the splotchy areas. The source photo is a guide, but I don't try to copy it.

Continued ▶



STAGE 8 BURNISHING THE DARK AREAS

I burnish the darker areas and the edges of the adjoining stones with a small oil Bristol brush cut to ¼-inch length. Burnish with a light touch and from many directions, to push the pigment together and into the paper, and only when there is enough pigment applied.



STAGE 9 FINAL ADJUSTMENTS

After burnishing, certain areas need deepening. I also go around and tighten up edges that need attention. The bottom shadow, the most delicate and time consuming, is done near the end. A clean kneaded eraser (used for this purpose only) has been used at every stage to remove dust and pigment from the white part of the paper.



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Deborah Friedman, born in Los Angeles, California, USA, graduated with a degree in printmaking from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, Massachusetts, USA, where she focused on lithography, etching and drawing. After college, she developed bodies of work in pastels, and then oils, before finding her way back to her love of drawing in graphite and eventually colored pencil. Friedman has received many awards and fellowships for her artwork, and exhibited work both nationally and internationally. Her artwork has been featured in numerous magazines and books domestically and abroad.

She is a signature member of the Colored Pencil Society of America, and an elected member of Allied Artists of America and the Catherine Lorillard Wolfe Art Club. For more information, to view latest works, and purchase original works and prints, visit her website.

Contact at

dl.friedman75@gmail.com
www.dlfriedman.com

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STAGE 10 THE FINISHED DRAWING

Tilted Carin, colored pencil, 10 x 10" (25 x 25 cm)



Amanda McLean

PASTEL PERSPECTIVES

Part 15-Pastel Paper Review

We continue an instructional series on the use of pastel, which also has application to artists using all mediums

What is a series on pastel without a discussion about the paper we work on? There are so many different pastel papers on the market now, and everyone seems to have their favourites.

Choice of paper is a very individual process. On one hand, we can all agree on some characteristics such as paper quality and its capacity to hold pastel. However, paper choice also depends on personal preference—what you feel comfortable with, and what you think works well with your style of painting, or choice of subject.

I know of artists who prefer to work using only one particular colour or brand. Personally I feel it is good to mix it up and not get too stuck in one's comfort zone. Over the past few years, some brands and colours have ceased production. Experimenting with a variety of different paper types and colours can help lessen the shock of these events. Trying different paper opens up new opportunities for creativity and skill development, and it helps prevent us from getting caught in a rut.

There are so many different types of paper on the market now. I certainly haven't had the opportunity to try them all. However, I have used a considerable number of the different types of pastel paper that is generally available, so will share the thoughts and ideas based on my experience to date.

When I first started working with pastel, there weren't many varieties available. There was Canson Mi Teintes (pronounced "me-tont" for those who are unsure) and Ingres style paper. The new kid on the block was Art Spectrum Colourfix. At least that was how it was here in Australia.

In the United States, Kitty Wallis (white paper) was so very popular. I remember reading that many U.S. artists wouldn't use anything else. As I dislike using white paper, I wasn't really interested to try it. Now it is no longer available.

I started out using both Mi Teintes original and a bit of Ingres, but once I tried the sanded surface of Colourfix I didn't look back. Sanded surfaces allowed me to apply multiple layers of pastel without the need for fixatives (which aren't good for pastel in the long term). For the way I work, pastel is all about the layers. The more tooth a paper has the more layers you can apply.

A bit later, Canson introduced its version of Colourfix in Mi Teintes Tex (in Australia) or Touch (in the UK, North America and the rest of the world). I still can't believe all these years later that there are people out there who haven't tried some of these newer papers. I'm not really sure why that is; but you get what you pay—for they are lightfast and good quality!

Lone Tree Cloudscape, pastel on Colourfix Original 'Elephant',
30½ x 11 cm (12 x 4")





Evening, Dicks Creek, Murrumbateman, pastel on Leaf Green Colourfix Smooth, 30 x 30 cm (12 x 12")

Here are a few of my favourite papers and grounds.

Colourfix Original

I love this paper. It's made using a toothy primer which is screen printed onto heavy grade watercolour paper, so you can under-paint it with watercolour, gouache or odourless medium. Alternately, you can add water to a light pastel underpainting. It will hold many layers of pastel. You can rub it and scrub it. You can even reuse it after

washing off the pastel from a previous work. Colourfix Original comes many different colours, in several sizes, in individual sheets and in pads.

Colourfix Smooth

This is a recent addition to the Colourfix range. This paper comes in all the traditional Colourfix colours, but has a smoother finish.

This paper is waterproof like the original, so you can underpaint, but the smoother finish makes it good for working fast. It's especially useful for plein air, portraiture and life drawing. It is also great for more detailed work because of the finer tooth. Colourfix Smooth is good for pastel pencil and pan pastel. Like Colourfix Original, it also comes in different sizes, individual sheets and pads.

Mi Teints Tex/Touch

This paper also comes in a great range of colours. I think it has a little less tooth than Colourfix original, and it is slightly less waterproof for underpainting. Having said that, if you keep the water to the primed area, you are OK. Mi Teints Tex/Touch comes in several sizes and in pads.

Pastel Premier

Another favourite of mine, this paper has a smooth yet very toothy and “grabby” texture. It holds pastel well, so you don’t need a lot of layers to get good coverage. It is good for working fast too. It comes in a limited colour range. I am a big fan of the Italian Clay colour, but it also comes in white, terra cotta, slate (dark grey) and buff. These are described as medium grit; although the white also comes in a fine grit. Pastel Premier paper is quite expensive, but well worth a try if you can get hold of it.

I always appreciate how easy it is to make corrections on this paper. Using a kneadable eraser is a breeze—it lifts the pastel straight off without a lot of effort. Pastel Premier comes in a variety of sizes. I find that the harder end of the soft pastel spectrum works beautifully on this paper but don’t like the way the very soft pastels work on it. I find they gum up the tooth too easily.

Richeson

This is a very coarse grit paper and comes as a lightweight board as well and good if you want to go on adding layers but still retain texture. It’s tough and can handle the hard work, allowing you to add multiple layers without losing the paper’s texture. It can also handle water for underpainting. Richeson paper comes in some nice and interesting colours. I haven’t used a lot of it but the seascape demo from part 7 of this series was done on the Storm coloured paper.

Ampersand Board

This is a heavy board with a very firm work surface. It has plenty of tooth, and the pastel grabs nicely. In Australia, it’s available in grey and white.



Beside the Quarry, pastel on Twilight Mi Teintes Tex/Touch Paper, 27 x 52 cm (11 x 20")



Clouds over Black Mountain, Canberra, pastel on Pastel Premier ‘Italian Clay’ Paper, 20½ x 28½cm (8 x 11")

Velour Board

I have always resisted working on Velour as no one seemed to be able to tell me if it was lightfast (and I still have visions of Elvis painted on black velvet in lurid colours from years gone by). However, after carrying out some tests in full sun over an extended period on a velour mat board by Hamptons, I

decided to give it a try. I had been told I needed to use hard pastels on velour paper but on the board soft pastels worked just fine for me. However, I found the very soft pastels came off the board very easily when it was bumped. Making corrections is quite difficult on Velour. As a result, working on it forgoes one of pastels’ great attributes, its forgiving



The Murrumbidgee, pastel on Beige Velour, Hamptons Board, 24 x 24 cm (9 x 9")
This subject had a lovely soft hazy light which was well suited to the velour board.

Some points to think on when choosing paper varieties

- ✓ Think about your subject when choosing your paper type.
Is it soft, highly textured or somewhere in between?
 - ✓ Do you need to work quickly as in life drawing or plein air?
 - ✓ Do you need to apply lots of fine detail?
 - ✓ Do you need to apply many layers of pastel to achieve the effect you are after?
 - ✓ Do you like to work with pastel pencils or pan pastels?
 - ✓ Do you want to apply extra texture in some areas?
 - ✓ Do you want to underpaint your piece first?
 - ✓ Is the paper colour fast, or is it likely to fade over time?
- All of these points can influence your choice of paper for a particular piece (without even considering the actual colour of the paper you will choose).

Continued



Clouds over Greenwood Road, Murrumbateman, NSW, pastel on 'Dark Grey' Sennelier Pastel Card, 30½ x 30½ cm (12 x 12")

nature when it comes to making corrections or changing things. That being said, I enjoy working on this board; it has a lovely feel and it was great for the soft atmospheric subjects I was trying to create.

Velour Paper

This seems to take pastel pencil well, but I found it difficult to keep traditional pastel

on it. Most came off when I bumped it. As I rarely use pastel pencil, this paper isn't for me. Wildlife artists love it.

Sennelier Pastel Card

I haven't used this a great deal. It feels toothy yet reasonably soft to work on. It's available in a range of interesting colours, and several different sizes are available. It's a very pleasant

paper that is worthwhile trying.

Colourfix Pastel Primer


This is great if you want to work large, as you can prime just about any surface and then pastel onto it. It is also great for textured subjects, as leaving the brushstrokes visible adds another dimension to your work. The pastel adhering to the tops of



Beside the Murrumbidgee, pastel on Colourfix primed board, 40 x 40 cm (16 x 16")

I used white Colourfix primer to which I applied a wash of Raw Sienna Gouache. It has great texture where it is needed but the ability to blend and soften the pastel where needed is a great attribute.

the brushstrokes gives the work a painterly effect not achieved on regular paper. Subjects can even be painted in the primer first, achieving texture where it is needed.

The paper or support you use can have a huge effect on your finished work. It is worthwhile spending a little extra time choosing one that will help you achieve your vision or just experimenting with them to see where they lead you. 

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Amanda McLean gave up her prior career to become a full-time artist. She has been working in pastel for over 30 years. McLean has written more than 20 articles for *Australian Artist* in the past, and was an Editorial Consultant for a number of years. Although pastel is her passion, she works in all mediums and is an avid sketch-booker. Her skill in rendering both skies and water in the landscape are especially acknowledged. She is highly regarded as a teacher. Her regular weekly classes have run continuously for nearly 20 years. She also conducts short and long workshops. McLean's work is held in collections nationally and internationally.

Contact at: www.amandamclean.net



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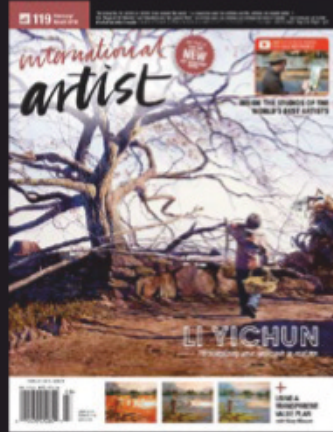
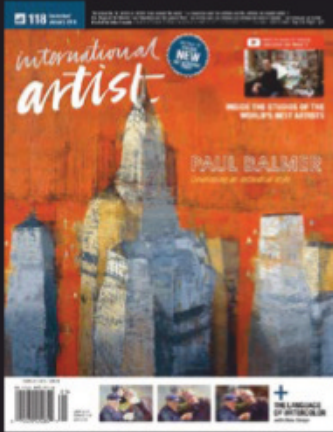


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Haoyun Erin Zhao

Changing paths

Growing up in China, I lived with my grandfather who was an academic. He was excellent at Chinese calligraphy and inspired me to study calligraphy and traditional Chinese brush painting. As early as I can remember, I have always been drawing,

painting and creating. I was very lucky that my grandfather not only inspired me, but also supported my study of art. With this support, I started taking art classes when I was 7 years old, and after graduating from high school at age 17, I moved to the United States to further

my education.

Attending the Academy of Art University in San Francisco provided me with a solid technical foundation in realistic visual representation, which gave me confidence in my art practice. Upon graduating and completing a solo exhibition of painterly realistic paintings, I continued to create new work. In creating these series, I found that the rules I learned in art school that previously provided me with confidence began to feel like constraints. I felt the need to push the boundaries and started questioning what I could explore outside of traditional realism. I started experimenting with different concepts and materials to search for my own language. That is when my work began



Oormi, acrylic and ink on wood,
20 x 16" (51 x 41 cm)

Nature has inspired my work tremendously, from its manifestations of color, texture, smell and sound, to its deeper meaning and connection to all living beings. During a 15-day solo trip in early 2018, I was moved by the breathtaking landscapes in Japan. Though this painting is not a representation of any existing place, and although I did not intend to depict a specific landscape, viewers have expressed that this imagery reminds them of Mount Fuji. Without realizing it, color and shape from my travels started to appear in my work and convinced me that I had brought back the best souvenir. This painting was started with diluted ink and layered with acrylic. Each piece of tape was cut to the exact width that I needed and was used to block the areas where I intended the color to remain. The paint for this work was applied using brushes and palette knives. Once the tape stencil was removed and the color had dried, the process was repeated. A hair dryer was very useful for shortening the drying time.



Dualism, acrylic on wood,
36 x 24" (91 x 61 cm)

Dualism is an interesting topic to me, because it enables various views of looking at body and mind and both the material and nonmaterial worlds. Dualism also suggests the quality or condition of coexistence and conflict leading to the search for balance, such as the concept of Ying and Yang in Chinese culture. Cool tones of blue and warm tones of yellow ochre were used on the first layer of the underpainting to divide the panel into two sections. After the underlayer, I drew and masked two opposite color triangles that comprise a larger rhombus shape and used this as a guideline for color temperature. I was constantly rotating the panel while working on this piece, making decisions along the way regarding where to add or take away information.

transitioning from painterly realism to abstraction.

As I explored different ways to communicate with visual language, my interest in spatial relationships and

materials grew stronger. I have since shifted my focus from imitating the three-dimensional world to the essence of color, line and shape. This shift granted me freedom and rekindled the

excitement I felt the first time I held a pencil or brush. I discovered these abstract elements could create worlds within themselves that challenge how we perceive physical space and



Three Paper Fortune Tellers (triptych), acrylic on canvas, 20 x 60" (50 x 152 cm)


This work consists of three abstracted images on three individual canvases; inspired by the origami fortune-teller that I played with when I was a child. Sequentially, each image performs in a state of stillness with a slightly different origami-like form. Each work provides a different experience to the viewer based on its own color, shape, and interactions. Acrylic paint was applied with soft brushes to ensure a smooth surface. One of my favorite parts of creating this series was mixing 21 different shades just for the center part of each piece, and then painting them seamlessly next to each other to create an optical illusion.

associate information. I have found that breaking the rules I once learned allows me to create rules of my own and find opportunities in abstraction that were inaccessible within the parameters of realism.

Interactions of color and shape play a pivotal role in my work, because I believe they have a great impact on us visually and psychologically. To explore visual sensations, I meticulously compose geometric shapes and organic curves to create a rhythmic composition with interchangeable positive and negative space. My current

body of work is an investigation of human perception and its connection to memory, culture, place and personal experience. I'm interested in bridging the tangible with the impalpable, in creating art that expresses feelings we experience but which we cannot put into words. Working primarily on primed wood panels and paper, I utilize layers of paint applied either freehand or with hand-cut stencils to create sharp edges. The process of masking, drawing, cutting, and applying paint is repeated to conceal and reveal information. In my printmaking work,

I work primarily with linocut printing because of its flexibility, boldness and hard-edged presence. I am also creating monoprints by layering painting and printmaking. Working with both disciplines simultaneously provides new perspectives and introduces various possibilities.

From a foundation in Chinese calligraphy and brush painting to training in realism, I gained the foundational techniques that provided me tools to explore and develop abstract works while applying new rules and discipline to my process. 



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Haoyun Erin Zhao is a visual artist based in San Francisco, California, USA, focusing on painting, printmaking, mural and public art. Erin received her BFA from The Academy of Art University. She teaches at ArtWorks Fine Art Studio in San Francisco. Erin was selected as one of the artists for Hearts in SF Project, 2019 by Zacherberg San Francisco General Hospital Foundation. The artist's work has been published on International Artist Magazine and exhibited in galleries, museum exhibitions and invitational shows at venues such as de Young Museum, Studio Gallery, Pacific Art League, AAU

The Cannery Gallery, Salesforce Art Showcase and more. Her work can be found in public and private collections in the U.S. and Asia.

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Central Australia

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WATERCOLOUR WORKSHOP



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CHAN DISSANYAKE

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OIL PAINTING WORKSHOP



CAMILLE PRZEWODEK

Lake Como and Cinque Terre, Italy

Sunday 8 September – Friday 20 September 2019

Paint some of the very best sights to be found in Lake Como and Cinque Terre in Italy with Camille Przewodek. Experience the unique charm and breath-taking beauty of Lake Como. The Cinque Terre is an artist's dream where you will be able to paint the dramatic views of the five villages along the Italian coast. This 13-day painting workshop with Camille Przewodek gives workshop members the opportunity to truly experience 'la dolce vita', the sweet life.



All our tutors will give you helpful and friendly advice on how to improve your painting to make sure you come back with a sketchbook full of memories.

DAVID TAYLOR

Italy, Slovenia and Croatia

Monday 23 September – Sunday 6 October, 2019

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WATERCOLOUR WORKSHOP



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DAVID TAYLOR & GREG ALLEN

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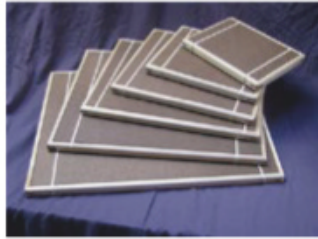
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Part 82 Key Discovery: Wet Painting Carriers

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These are boxes or frames for carrying your paintings while they are still wet. They prevent your painting from getting damaged while you are traveling. There are two types of systems: frame systems and box systems.



The Frame System

This is a single frame that is similar to a picture frame with a rabbet cut into it in order to keep two paintings separate. They are designed to carry just two paintings back to back. This is my favorite way of transporting wet paintings.

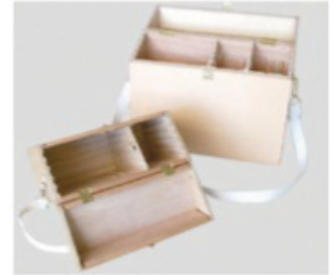
Pros

- » You can carry many different sized panels.
- » It is a lot lighter than a wooden drying box.

- » It is stronger than a plastic drying box whose sides can easily bend and damage a painting if pushed.

Cons

- » You have to have two panels of the same size back to back for protection. If you finished one painting and are painting a second, your first painting is unprotected for the time you are painting the second painting. I solve this problem by carrying at least two panel carriers of the same size (for four paintings), or by carrying an extra panel. Since I use Gator Board panels, this method hardly adds any extra weight.



The Box System

Box type wet panel carriers can carry any number of paintings, typically from four to 12. They consist of a box with slots to separate the paintings.

Cons

- » They are heavy.
- » You have to paint a lot of paintings all the same size (the multi-size ones are even heavier).

Tips for Selecting a Wet Panel Carrier

- » Make sure there is a good gap between the two paintings, so that if you use thick paint there is no possibility of damage.
- » If you paint on loose linen taped to a board, then you will need a very large gap. The board warps and also the linen moves away from the board in humid conditions, so it is very easy for two paintings to touch each other and get damaged.

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Each lesson includes an overview of the principle or technique, one or more short videos to demonstrate the skill you are learning, many examples of how to do it, and one or more assignments to assist you in assimilating the material.

Lessons For All Skill Levels

The Apprentice Program is designed for all levels of artists, from beginners to more experienced artists and professionals. Beginners work through the lessons in sequence. For more experienced artists, the program is structured to give you complete flexibility in your learning program. Strengthen your foundation in those areas in which you are weakest and take your paintings to a new and higher level.

Master Artist Critiques

A key element of this program is a study of historical master works. Discover what makes them work, increase your appreciation and enjoyment of great artworks, and apply that knowledge to your own work.

Flexibility

The program is available on a simple and flexible pay-as-you-go monthly payment plan. You do not need to commit up-front to the whole program and you can cancel at any time. Join our 800+ students who have already improved their painting skills, and you will soon be on the road to painting success.

Key Discoveries in Practice: Italy, Florence, The Arno



Italy, Florence, The Arno, oil on linen, 25 x 30 cm (10 x 12")

I painted this from the embankment next to the Ponte Vecchio in Florence, Italy one evening. I liked the way the warm evening light hit the bridge and the buildings, contrasting with the deep blue grays in the river and in the cloud shadows. This was a good application of the key discoveries of warm/cool contrast and repeating color spots.

The diagram at left shows how I conceived of the painting in an abstract sense. You can see how the



warm/cool overall plan was designed and also the plan of the repeating color spots. This method of thinking about painting is called abstract realism. It combines the best of both the abstract and realistic worlds.

Another principle being used here is our familiar key



discovery of notan. This time however, the use is subtle. Within the water I painted a kaleidoscope of colors all of roughly the same middle value. This lets you have a simple, and therefore strong, notan design, but at the same time adds interest and excitement to the painting.

IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES OF ART

Harley Brown's fascinating things no one else will tell you FINDING MEANING

I no longer try to convince myself and others that I understand modern art. You know that, but let us go further: novels and dramas with too many characters and plot twists. Music? It seems melodies are optional.

OK, there are a few non-objective works of today that move me. It's not often, but I see heart and soul and talent trying to reach out to my eyes. I see them in galleries, homes and publications like *International Artist*.

What I'm saying here is that I'm channeling my life in a way that is tuned into what really inspires me. I'm even open to be dazzled. I've got no limit in likes. Just limits in patience.

In my studio, when I reached the age of 45 years, from that moment on, I remained 45. I'm now nearly 80 and I can tell you that walking into my studio is like going into a time machine; back to 45 years young. Many artists will tell you of this same life-giving phenomenon. I could write a book on this subject, but will now happily see you live it.

An Important Truth

You're never alone if you have a pencil and piece of paper. Making a mark, any kind of mark, delivers us blissfully into the realm of artistic creativity...we're making something from nothing. At that very moment, loneliness evaporates. And by making those marks, we join with all other individual artists in that ethereal, marvelous universe. We artists join forces spiritually.

I spent a good part of my art life, drawing directly from models, whether commissioned portraits or for galleries. Many years drawing and painting people,



animals and old villages. So when I work from a photograph, my approach is very close to my art pieces from life. Yes, there are times a photo is quite the only way: action scenes, children, general activities, animals in motion. Photos are imperative behind many paintings.

I know that many artists take those photos a few steps further in transferring digitally on canvas or paper or old-fashioned tracing. What's done in the privacy of a studio is the personal freedom of the artist. My only hope is that the artist knows when to



Studio Pastel

Some of you will recognize this piece. The reason it's here is that it was done at a pivotal moment. I'll explain. At the Scottsdale Artists' School, we decided I'd teach a full month workshop, including weekends and evenings. In other words, 28 straight 10-hour days. (Many of the students couldn't handle the pressure and were continually replaced.)

I'll get right to the point. I was totally worn out on the last afternoon of the last day. We had one more woman who was modeling and I told the students to relax and watch my final demo. At this point, I was fully thwacked and truly couldn't remember my name. I asked the model to sit and relax any way she wanted. I handed her a wine glass to hold then went at it.

You can see the freedom of my strokes. My conscious mind was down to near zero and my inner mind took full control. I quickly laid down the basic shapes and combined purple with the grey paper as mid-tones.

- A. Floppy hat adds character
- B. Simple but important shadow cast on the face adds life, drama
- C. Fluff of the ponytail breaks the back line
- D. Shoulder angle contrast to the cheek shadow, and gives rhythm
- E. Arms resting on lap make interesting part of the "story"
- F. Bent knee is important in bringing the figure from left side to middle, balance.
- G. This dark area is a foundation of the leaning body and lap
- H. Horizontal chair and forearms stabilize the angles throughout

push certain forms and colors. How far to exaggerate a jawline, locks of hair, raised arm, folds in clothing, the hues, the contrasts, the shapes.

Something worthwhile is to see the works that Norman Rockwell did from photographs. These are shown in some Rockwell books. You will note how much more character he pulls from static photos used, but not so much that they appear cartoonish, No, they're even more human.

I've always told student artists that drawing from life truly brings a heartening skill into the works done from photography. Like when singing not just the words, but from experiences of life. Love, tragedy, longing, sweetness. We put real life into the pages of a novel just as we bring real life onto a canvas.

Making a Living

Many of you reading these words have the deepest desire of one day making a

When finished, I babbled a few words to class and bid farewell. My mind was a total blank; I didn't remember actually doing this piece. I went to the car, fell asleep for an hour and drove home. It took a couple of days for me to slide back to normal. For many reasons, this painting is very, very important to me.

First Nation

This is an example of when I do an oil painting with no breaks. It's me full throttle with nothing more in mind than subject, oil paint, brush and canvas. The pure joy of putting one stroke of oil after the other.

Yes, but those strokes were placed with accuracy. Here's a phrase for you: "laid on with passionate accuracy." Going for the passion alone is in truth a common cop out. It demeans the artist and subject. In art, we need more than passion. I was passionate when I was 5 years old. From then on, I learned what to do with it.

Here we see the eye sockets, nostrils and lips placed just right. Also we see how inspired I was interpreting them. I have the greatest respect for the human body and it forever fascinates me. Let's face it, I have over 7 billion subjects yet to paint.

living from your art. Getting up in the morning, grabbing a coffee, a donut and into the studio. Turning on the radio, Emily the cat over in the corner and an empty canvas on the easel just waiting for those first strokes. The subject could be what you thought of during the night. Or perhaps something specific that a patron can't wait for you to finish.

Let me make this simple: I've known hundreds of artists who make their living through their art. Every day, from year to year. Their talents are as variable as their subjects. And those subjects could be animals or mountain scenes, portraits or still lifes. Yes, they follow their bliss. (Incidentally, I also know a few contemporary artists. Wonderful friends.)

You, my dear reader, are absolutely in this group. If you still have another way of making your living outside art, you will, sooner than you think, be a full-time artist. Beginning now, put that solidly in your mind. Second, begin to paint or draw subjects you love with the approach that comes naturally. Begin to look at galleries. Make your prices modest. Remember, in the art world we want prices to go up and not down.

If you're like me, you are obsessive,



paranoid, ridden with anxiety, semi-reserved and understand your faults. And above this, you are dedicated to eventually hopping onto the professional artist wagon. At first it's a bumpy road but you'll get used to that; in fact it adds to your eccentric character.

Don't think of reasons like "can't do" or "that's unrealistic." I'm here with my hundreds of art friends to welcome you onto this wagon and can't wait for you to actually live your dream. There's no "hope" in this, there's reality and I'm here as proof that this reality will happen.

As of this moment, you, like me and my friends, will have a wondrous life

that is actually impossible to explain. And you'll know just what I mean.

You're on your way and don't give up even when you're in your 90s.

Welcome. I do mean *welcome!*

An Artist's Experience

My conscious mind comes up with main ideas during a painting and then my subconscious wings it from there. It's a mental partnership with me watching and experiencing all this, right in the middle. What I've described here is real; I'm literally experiencing me, the artist.

Before I begin the first strokes of a painting or drawing, I stand for a while

and really observe my subject. My eyes scan certain areas that interest me; parts that I know will be exciting to interpret. I look intently at shapes and shadows; color will flow when forms start pulling together. A developing confidence will allow me arrogance while applying those hues.

Finding the Composition

What can be fun is casually placing objects onto a table. A pan, vase, couple of oranges, a toy, a small sculpture, different sizes and shapes. Maybe even a painting in the background. Don't spend too much time sorting things out. Think of this display as similar to a bunch of trees and bushes, or a street corner. What you want to do is a sketch of these objects in such a way as to make your drawing interesting. Extra details of importance in certain areas; decide where to make more contrasts with light and dark. Overall design.

I've done this with a pad of paper on my lap and drawing the other side

of the room. My challenge is to make something that's rather mundane, into something quite "eye catching." This has often happened when in a local life class and I'm stuck in a so-so spot. The model comes onto the stage and I have a natural desire to make this drawing more than interesting. Often it happens!

Drama is making the ordinary compelling. Sometimes subtly, other times dynamic. Do this often, with junk on a table, those people sitting at the airport, that skyline, the cat at the foot of the bed. We as artists make life, everyday life, blossom.


Certainly there are times I'll set specially picked objects on a table and rearrange until I'm satisfied. I might change the lighting and move my easel around. My description of that casual setup is also important in that it has me make the well-known lemonade from a lemon.

Personal Approach

Something always concerning me is that

many artists are afraid to get help and instruction from other artists. They're afraid that they'll start to copy the style of their mentors. Adding extra weight to it, they don't want others to know that certain artists helped them with their art; and in a way, will emulate their teacher.

I'll make this simple: I had dozens of professional artists give me suggestions and weighty lessons over the years. From out in the fields painting from life, to Art Students League of New York, here's the result: my approach/ technique/style are nowhere near any of my mentors. I'll add that I wouldn't have hit my important aesthetic stages without their brilliant guidance.

Think of it this way. Help and encouragement from others will increase your confidence with your own artistic manner. As your confidence grows, so will your personal approach. So much so that you will draw and paint directly from your own individual self. Just as those good artists helped me become me. Indelibly me. 

BALINOESKI

You're looking at part of my history here. I did this work in my 20s. After my parents saw it, my dad said, "You are an artist." I put it safely away as one would a special treasure. All of us remember moments of our younger years and those words from my dad meant everything. I've brought it out for the first time since then for you to see. It is an "abstract" build upon my name. For starters, you can see the B. The rest has to be hunted down. I must admit, for a few moments, I forgot where a few of the letters were placed. I know that Harley has used letters as his motif at times, which inspired me to bring this to you. Here's a question: Would you make your name into a work of art? You'll not regret what it creates.



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